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THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

NUMBER 7075 VOLUME 276 FEBRUARY 1988



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Peach Robinson's photographic portraits 22



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COVER STORY

50 WAYS TO IMPROVE LONDON The capital appears particularly drab under the grey skies of February. In a 12 page feature we suggest changes and innovations—not always in a serious vein—to enliven the spirits of Londoners and make one of the world's great cities a better place in which to live 30

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COVER Comic Relief's Red Nose Day is on February 5: another way to brighten up London? Photograph by Today/Rex

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EDITOR
Henry Porter

The error of her ways

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"ALL FREEDOMS, to justify themselves, require a sense of responsibility. It is this which is so conspicuously lacking in large parts of the British media today." This is the conclusion of a recent article by the conservative polemicist Paul Johnson. In general it is difficult to disagree with him, but he makes this remark in a very strange context indeed.

He says that the current fashion for revelations about the intelligence services is frivolous and that the attempts by *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer* and *The Guardian* newspapers to print the reminiscences of old spies is irresponsible sensationalism. At the risk of provoking another fit of linguistic apoplexy from Mr Johnson, it must be said that this is balderdash. There is a very serious issue here and, although we must admire his unswerving loyalty to the Prime Minister, he is being frivolous to ignore it.

The point about the allegations made in Peter Wright's book, *Spycatcher*, and in Anthony Cavendish's more recent memoirs, *Inside Intelligence*, is that they air important doubts about the behaviour of the security services over the last two decades. While secrecy is necessary in a democracy so is the right of the media to challenge it. For there is no other organization outside the establishment which has the power to do so. What Mr Johnson and most of the Cabinet forget is that servants of parliament, however secret their work, are still servants of the people. If they abuse their authority and their secrecy, and there is evidence to suggest that they may have done so, they abuse the people.

The Government's many court actions against the Press here and abroad, which doubtless have the support of Mr Johnson, take place against a background of increasing anxiety about Section Two of the Official Secrets Act. The Press and many politicians on both sides of the House believe that it is not only unfair but that it has become so discredited as to be unworkable.

At the time of going to press, it looks as if the Government has firmly sat upon the sensible Private Member's Bill, introduced by Richard Shepherd, to rationalize the legislation involving official information. He has made three main proposals: that there should be a distinction between the revelation of trivial information and that which jeopardizes national security; that information which is already freely available (as in the *Spycatcher* case) may not be covered by secrets legislation; and that the Official Secrets Act should no longer be used to shield any crime or abuse of authority.

The Prime Minister mounted a campaign against the Shepherd Bill and refused to discuss its contents with him. It was as if he belonged to a particularly extreme part of the Militant Tendency, rather than her own party. This was especially surprising since she herself supported

90 per cent of the proposals that he makes, when they were put forward nearly a decade ago in the wake of the Franks Report.

What has happened to Mrs Thatcher since then? The answer is quite simply that she has been Prime Minister and has come to realize that Section Two is an extremely useful instrument of suppression. The Prime Minister who stood in the House of Commons to make an open and honest statement about Anthony Blunt in 1979 is a very different creature from the Prime Minister who has railed against the individuals and organizations that have questioned the Government and its secret servants. In short, she has absorbed the British establishment's vice of secrecy and has become its most enthusiastic champion. There is nothing to suggest in her attitude that she will replace Mr Shepherd's bill with government legislation that has the same spirit of sensible reform.

So the British media, despite their obvious inadequacies, are right to challenge the Government on this issue. Secrecy is only justifiable when it is responsible and accountable.

It may be that the cover story of this month's issue is the result of a collective attack of SAD at *The Illustrated London News*. SAD stands for seasonal affective disorder and is used by American psychiatrists to describe what we all know as winter blues. Certainly the article was born out of a collective frustration with the capital at this time of year and a feeling that the city does very little to raise the spirits of its inhabitants in February.

The other important feature this month is a long, detailed portrait of Tom Wolfe, the American writer whose first novel, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, is published in Britain in February. It is among the best novels of the last five years and curiously captures the spirit of New York in the 1980s.

This month we introduce a regular arts feature called Overture which will start the Reviews and Listings section at the back of the magazine. Each month we will illuminate an individual in the arts. It will be an appreciation rather than a criticism of their work.

International Management Group (IMG)

The article on Selina Scott published in our November, 1987 issue referred to the role of IMG in managing Miss Scott's affairs. This article was critical of certain specific aspects of IMG's operations, particularly in relation to advice given by IMG to its clients concerning career development and their financial affairs. We now acknowledge that such criticism was unjustified, and therefore wish to withdraw it, and to apologize to IMG for any damage done to the company's reputation as a result of this article ○

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POST HOUSE HOTEL,
PLYMOUTH.

Towering high over Plymouth Hoe, where Drake played bowls before routing the Spanish Armada, is the Mayflower Post House. The name recalls the departure of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620 from the harbour below. The menu in the panoramic restaurant is enhanced by the view of Plymouth Sound.



THE LION
SHREWSBURY

High on Wyle Cop (Welsh for hill top) The Lion was called the King of England's Inn when originally built in the 14th Century. It has accommodated many famous visitors to this historic Shropshire town on the River Severn, near the Welsh border. William IV danced here. Paganini played in the Adam-style assembly rooms. Dickens occupied two of its many charming rooms and De Quincy wrote his 'Confessions of an Opium Eater' here.



THE COMPLEAT ANGLER, MARLOW.

On the middle reach of the Thames, close by the M4, Isaac Walton penned the hotel's namesake here 350 years ago. Today, it's famous for its comfort, cuisine and well chosen cellar.



The only hotel in Hyde Park, the building majestically dominates Knightsbridge. This elegant Edwardian landmark overlooks the horse-riding in "Rotten Row" and the daily ride past of the Household Cavalry.



HYDE PARK HOTEL
LONDON.



TWO BREWERS, CHIPPERFIELD.

Dating from the 17th Century, the hotel overlooks the church and cricket green of this historic pastoral Hertfordshire village on the edge of the Chilterns.

Chipperfield is in the heart of the countryside, yet it's the ideal business venue because it's just off the A41, within easy reach of London, the M1, M25, M40 and M4. The Two Brewers was once a training headquarters for bare knuckle fighters but today's visitors more often wear white as they walk off the cricket pitch and into the oak-beamed bar.

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Mikhail Gorbachev and President Reagan signed their much heralded treaty and reiterated their common desire for peace and further arms reductions

THE MONTH

“STILL A LOT TO DO”

Mikhail Gorbachev, Washington, December 8

THE ACCORD between East and West created a climate of optimism for the end of the year, however all was not well. Aside from arms control, human rights in the Soviet Union was one of the main issues. But also in the West. Israel was accused by David Mellor, the British Foreign Office minister, of abusing the rights of Palestinians on the Gaza Strip.

More shockingly, Amnesty International published a report that condemned the torture, imprisonment and possible execution of minors.

In many countries innocent children are being abused. Extreme examples include Noor Jahan, who was imprisoned with her mother in Burma when she was just one year old because they

were suspected of being illegal immigrants. That was in 1957 and they have remained in jail for over 30 years uncharged and untried. In Iraq at least 300 children were arrested by the security forces in 1985, apparently in retaliation for the political activities of their parents. The bodies of two of the children were returned to their families in January, 1987; the fate

of the rest of them is unknown.

The Olympic year was also heralded by the first presidential election in South Korea for 16 years but there followed widespread accusations of ballot rigging as Roh Tae Woo, the ruling party candidate, was elected. With only seven months to go until the start of the Olympic Games, the situation remains volatile.



The Rossetti Ross twins, aged 10, were born in a detention centre in Argentina and forcibly separated from their mother. Their father has since located them in Paraguay and is fighting a long legal battle to get them back



AFRAPIX

Joseph, aged 12, was beaten by South African police and detained for three months. In April, 1987, 1,424 children were arrested under the emergency regulations



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Boris Yuncacallo, a Peruvian schoolboy aged 14, was arrested by an army patrol in October, 1983 while out buying sugar. All attempts to locate him have failed



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Gnanaguru Aravinthan, aged 13, is one of several Tamil children to have gone missing in the past three years. He was last seen cycling past an army camp in September, 1985

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7

● Mikhail Gorbachev arrived for talks with Mrs Thatcher during a two-hour stopover at Brize Norton RAF station while on his way to a three-day summit with President Reagan in Washington. Mrs Thatcher described the meeting as "an occasion to plan the way forward". It was the first such visit by a Soviet General Secretary since 1956. The following day Gorbachev and Reagan signed their treaty, which would lead to the elimination of all medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles. Reagan described it as "an excellent example of the rewards of patience", while Gorbachev said he hoped the date would "mark a watershed in separating the era of mounting risk of nuclear war

from the demilitarization of human life". However, the two leaders failed to make any apparent breakthrough in talks on long-range weapons and the situation in Afghanistan.

● The French government said it was expelling 20 Iranian opponents of the Khomeini régime who have been living in exile in France. The expulsions were thought to be linked to the recent release of two French hostages held in the Lebanon.

● Forty-three people died when a Pacific Southwest Airways jet crashed in Cayucos, California after the pilot reported gunfire and smoke in the cockpit. A former airline employee, who had recently been sacked, was thought to be responsible.

● Eight people were killed when a

gunman went on the rampage in an office block in Melbourne. He then jumped to his death from a 12th-floor window.

● Israeli soldiers clashed with Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, and by December 23 at least 22 Palestinians had been killed, several hundred injured and at least 1,000 people detained by the Israeli authorities. Israel's 750,000 Arab citizens went on strike in protest against the violence while Western governments expressed concern at the Israeli methods of handling the demonstrations, and a UN resolution, on which the US abstained, urged "minimum restraint". On January 3 a Palestinian woman was accidentally shot dead by soldiers pursuing an Arab youth in

Ar-Ram, north of Jerusalem. Later, Israel served deportation orders on nine Palestinians for organizing subversive activities. On January 4 David Mellor, the Foreign Office minister, expressed horror at the conditions at a Palestinian refugee camp during his visit to the Gaza Strip. His comments were condemned by Israelis of all parties. The following day another Palestinian refugee was killed and the UN, this time with the support of the US, voted to endorse a resolution condemning the deportation of Palestinians from occupied territories. By January 10, after a month of unrest, 30 Palestinians had been killed.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

● The Church of England said that Dr Gareth Bennett, an Oxford theologian who committed suicide on December 7, was the author of the anonymous attack on the Archbishop of Canterbury in *Crockford's Clerical Directory* which accused Dr Robert Runcie of being a weak and ineffectual leader during a time of crisis in the Church. A meeting of the General Synod on December 10 cleared the two church bureaucrats who commissioned the article of any wrongdoing or mismanagement.

"It is all too easy for passionate loyalty to one's country, race or religion, or even one's football club, to be corroded into intolerance, bigotry and ultimately violence."

The Queen referring to Enniskillen during her Christmas Message

● Mike Gatting, the England cricket captain, was accused of cheating by Shakoor Rana, the umpire, during the Second Test against Pakistan in Faisalabad. A full-scale row developed and there was no play during the following day. On December 11, Peter Lush, the England manager, on instructions from the Test and County Cricket Board ordered Gatting, against his will, to apologize in writing to the umpire for using bad language. The England players later issued a statement "deploring the fact that it was not possible to effect a compromise solution" and criticizing the stand of the TCCB. The match restarted and ended in a draw.

● A painting by Annibale Carracci dated 1585, valued at £400 by Sotheby's in the summer, was sold for £847,000 by Phillips.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

● SAS, the Scandinavian airline group, announced plans to pay £130 million for an initial 23.5 per cent voting stake in British Caledonian. The following day British Airways raised its cash offer to £200 million. On December 22, BA finally acquired control with a bid of £250 million.

● Scientists from the National Autonomous University in Mexico City said they had developed a 2 foot minicow which was more efficient at producing milk than normal cows.



As Palestinian refugees rioted in the camps, Israel faced its worst crisis in the occupied territories since it moved into the Gaza Strip and the West

● French police were told to prohibit nude joggers after complaints from strollers on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

● Two armed prisoners, gangland boss John Kendall and bank robber Sydney Draper, escaped by helicopter from Gartree top-security prison in Leicestershire. On December 23 two remand prisoners, Aliou Ceesay and William Shoesmith, escaped from Pentonville prison in London after chiselling through their cell wall.

● The House of Lords ruled that a journalist on *The Independent* newspaper who correctly predicted the outcome of two city takeover bids must reveal his sources to the Department of Trade & Industry. Jeremy Warner said he would be prepared to face a prison sentence rather than expose his informants.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

● The Government said it would be

making special payments totalling £100 million to 9.5 million pensioners because of a computer error which led to the publication of incorrect inflation figures for the past 21 months.

“Those who are known to be involved in homosexual practice will not be sponsored for training for ordination nor will they be ordained in this diocese.”

The Bishop of Ripon, David Young, December 28

● An inquiry into the death of four-year-old Kimberley Carlile, who was battered and starved by her stepfather, called for a review of the child protec-

tion system and the introduction of new powers for social workers. The report also criticized Martin Ruddock, the social worker at the centre of the case, for failing to protect Kimberley. On December 17 an inquiry into the death of 22-month-old Tyra Henry, who was battered by her stepfather while in the care of Lambeth Council, blamed social workers for misjudgments and incompetence.

● Twelve people, including four children, were killed when a car bomb planted by Basque Separatists exploded outside a police barracks in Saragossa.

● Sixty-four children were killed while on a school outing near Cairo when their bus collided with a train.

● The American magazine *Esquire* named Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North as the “Most Dubious Man of the Year”.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

● Belgium's opposition Socialist

parties made substantial gains in the country's general election and increased the chances of their securing a place in a new coalition. The former Christian Democrat prime minister, Dr Wilfried Martens, was asked to head a caretaker administration until a new government was formed.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14

● David Lange, the New Zealand prime minister, protested to France after Major Alain Mafart, one of two French secret-service saboteurs who had been convicted of manslaughter and confined to the Pacific island of Hao after blowing up the Greenpeace flagship in Auckland Harbour in 1985, was flown to Paris for medical treatment. He had served half of his three-year sentence. Jacques Chirac, the French prime minister, said the decision to send Major Mafart home had been taken after “unquestionable medical authority” and that the New Zealand reaction was exaggerated.



South Koreans had the chance to vote in an election for the first time since 1971 but the government's man still won



Bank in 1967. Israeli troops were widely criticized for the methods they used to control the demonstrators

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15

● The Football League management committee told publisher Robert Maxwell that they would not accept his proposed purchase of Watford unless he sold his family's interests in Derby County, Oxford United and Reading. On December 20, Maxwell withdrew from his agreement with Elton John to buy Watford.

● A Government bill banning the promotion of homosexuality in schools was passed in the Commons even though the sitting was suspended for five minutes because of gay rights protests in the public gallery. The clause in the Local Government Bill also prevents councils from promoting homosexuality or publishing material on it.

● Gary Hart, the former Colorado senator, who pulled out of the race for the Democratic presidential nomination in May because of a scandal over his relationship with a model,

announced that he was re-entering the race. He said it was the toughest thing he had ever done.

"Gaza is in a state of limbo at the moment. Nothing has been done to improve the lot of these people . . . The Israeli authorities cannot duck their responsibilities."

David Mellor during a visit to the Jabaliya refugee camp, January 4.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16

● Roh Tae Woo, the ruling party candidate, won South Korea's presidential election. The two main opposition candidates, Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam, claimed the

result had been stage-managed. On December 20 hundreds of students fought with riot police after several days of protests against the "invalid" elections.

● The Government announced an immediate £101.8 million increase in this year's allocation of funds to regional health authorities.

● Michael Heseltine, the former environment secretary, attacked the Government's proposed poll tax in the Commons by saying that it was "fatally flawed" and would forever be known as the "Tory tax". The following day 30 backbench Tory MPs rebelled against the poll tax bill with 17, including Edward Heath and Sir Ian Gilmour, voting against. The Government had a majority of 72.

● At the end of the first stage of the Cleveland child sex abuse inquiry, it was agreed that Dr Marietta Higgs and Dr Geoffrey Wyatt, the two consultant paediatricians, would remain off

clinical duties until the inquiry finishes at the end of January.

● The largest Mafia trial ever held in Italy ended with 19 top mafiosi, including the Godfather of the Sicilian Mafia, Michele "The Pope" Greco, being sent to prison for life and 300 others being sent to jail. The trial at Palermo assize court began on February 10, 1986 and, in all, the tribunal interrogated 1,314 people. Within hours of the verdict gunmen killed two suspected informers.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17

● The Government announced that unemployment figures fell in November by 63,000 to 2,648,000.

● Gustav Husak, the Secretary General of the Communist party in Czechoslovakia, resigned and was succeeded by Milos Jakes.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18

● The Civil Aviation Authority banned flights to Paris from the new London City Airport because pilots fear mid-air collisions.

● Garry Kasparov retained his title of world chess champion by beating his arch-rival Anatoly Karpov in the last game of their 24-match series in Seville to square the match at 12-12.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

● New Zealand's appeal court rejected a ban on the publication and sale of Peter Wright's *Spycatcher*. The following day a High Court judge in London said that newspapers should be free to publish allegations of treason mentioned in the book. The Government said it would appeal, and a temporary injunction remains in force.

● At least 2,000 people died when a ferry collided with a tanker off Mindoro Island near the Philippines.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21

● The BBC admitted responsibility for the advance publication of the contents of the Queen's Christmas Message and ordered a full internal inquiry. The story was broken by Michael Cole, the BBC Court Correspondent, to nine other journalists at an informal lunch. The details appeared in six tabloid newspapers the following day after *The Star* decided to publish the story. Cole was later assigned to other duties at the BBC.

● England drew with Pakistan in the third Test match in Karachi and so lost the series 1-0.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22

● Zimbabwe's two main political parties, Zapu and Zanu, agreed to form one party to be called Zanu-PF and thus form a one-party Marxist/Leninist state. On December 31, Robert Mugabe became the country's first president.

● John McMichael, a Loyalist paramilitary leader, was killed by an IRA bomb outside his home in Lisburn, Co Antrim.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23

● The Yemen Arab Republic said that two Birmingham sisters who said they were sold by their father for £1,300 each as child brides seven years ago could be flown home. However, they later added that their husbands would have to accompany them.

● British Petroleum announced that it was going ahead with a £2.3 billion offer for Britoil, the North Sea oil company, after receiving permission from the Takeover Panel and in spite of Government opposition.



Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Romanenko returned to earth after 326 days in space. He was awarded the Order of Lenin

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

● The Norwegian-registered tanker *Berg Brig* was attacked in the Gulf and the following day Iranian gunboats set on fire the South Korean merchant vessel *Hyundai*. The 20 Korean sailors were rescued by helicopters from the British frigate *Scylla* and the American frigate *Elrod*.

"I have the power of ideas and I can govern this country."

Gary Hart on re-entering the race for the Democratic presidential nomination, December 15

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26

● Anthony Cavendish, a former MI6 officer who left the service in 1953, privately published his memoirs and sent 500 copies of the book as a Christmas card to his friends. It was thought that legal moves against him were unlikely although George Foulkes, a Labour spokesman on foreign affairs, said that if the Government failed to act it would expose its battle against Peter Wright's *Spycatcher* as a "vindictive vendetta". On January 3 the Government obtained a High Court injunction against *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times* relating to Cavendish's experience in the security and intelligence services. On January 5 *The Scotsman* newspaper was barred from publishing his memoirs but on January 7 the *Glasgow Herald* printed extracts from the book. The Government said it would take action against the newspaper.

● The French horse *Nupsala*, ridden by André Pommier and trained by François Doumen, won the King George VI Chase at Kempton Park.

● Sir Melford Stevenson, the controversial judge, died aged 85.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

● The dollar slumped to record lows against other currencies, prompting the White House to issue a statement opposing any further decline. The following day the UK stock market fell 3.4 per cent, with a loss of £12.4 billion in share values and the dollar closed at \$1.8585 against the pound. On January 4 large purchases of dollars by Japanese and German central banks and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York halted the slide and the dollar rose sharply against all the leading world currencies. However on January 8 share prices on Wall Street fell 140 points, a decline prompted by reports that the 1989 US budget deficit had been underestimated.

● The Bishop of Ripon, the Right Reverend David Young, said in a letter to his Yorkshire diocese that he was barring active homosexuals from joining his clergy. The following day the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, expressed support for the bishop's policy.

● Gene Simmons, a retired air force sergeant, killed 16 people, 14 of them members of his own family, in a 25-minute shooting spree in Russellville, Arkansas. He later gave himself up to the police.

● At least 22 people were thought to have died after five days of clashes between rival black activists in Pietermaritzburg township in Natal. By January 8 fourteen more blacks had died in continued fighting.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

● Yuri Romanenko, the Soviet cosmonaut, returned to earth after a record spell of almost 11 months in space in his Soyuz TM-3 capsule. It was later discovered that Romanenko had grown a centimetre taller during his 326 days in space and put on 3lb 8oz. On December 31 Nasa confirmed that two recent setbacks at a testing facility, one of which resulted in the death of five workers, meant that the shuttle's next launch was being postponed indefinitely. One Californian astronomer was quoted as saying, "If I were a graduate in space science, I'd be learning Russian now."

● The Prime Minister was reported to be "furious" after *The Sun* newspaper broke a strict embargo under which the New Year Honours list is issued to the Press. The paper published the names of two heroes of the Zeebrugge disaster

"We feel strongly that any further decline in the dollar would be counter-productive. The United States wants to see stability"

Marlin Fitzwater, White House spokesman, December 28

24 hours early. Among those recognized when the honours were officially announced the following day were Sir Robert Armstrong, the retiring Cabinet Secretary and Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls, who were both made life peers. Judi Dench, the

actress, became a DBE, while Andrew Parker, a bank official, was one of many honoured for courage on the *Herald of Free Enterprise*. He was awarded the George Medal.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

● A survey of 60 Irish burglars revealed that a big dog is still the greatest deterrent to a would-be house-breaker.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 1988

● Government papers dating back to October, 1957 and now released for the first time showed that the Macmillan government suppressed a report on the Windscale nuclear fire during which a cloud of radioactive radiation was released. Up to 33 deaths are thought to be related to the accident. Behind the decision was a feeling that if the full details became public it would mar attempts to co-operate with the United States in the development of nuclear weapons.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

● At least 21 people were killed and more than 30 injured during Israeli air raids on guerrilla positions in southern Lebanon.

MONDAY, JANUARY 4

● The Worcester and District health authority confirmed that three people in Malvern had died of meningitis since Boxing Day. Further cases were later reported in Wales, Cleveland, Warwickshire and Surrey but Sir Donald Acheson, the Chief Medical Officer, denied the country was facing an epidemic.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

● The Government said it would impose strict controls on the use of polyurethane foam in furniture after the deaths by fire of 10 children since the beginning of the year. The following day senior fire chiefs said the proposed legislation was inadequate and demanded a total ban on the foam. On January 11 the Government said that both standard and high resistance foams would be banned from February, 1989.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6

● Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, said that the Soviet Union hoped to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan this year.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7

● Mrs Thatcher arrived in Nigeria after her visit to Kenya and was greeted at Lagos Airport by trade unionists protesting about her stand on South Africa. Later President Babangida referred to the strength of feeling about apartheid but Mrs Thatcher again emphasized that sanctions would only make matters worse.

● Night nurses at North Manchester General Hospital went on a 24-hour strike in protest over proposed cuts in pay for unsocial hours.

● Trevor Howard, the actor and star of such film classics as *Brief Encounter*, *The Third Man* and *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, died aged 71.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

● Viscount Whitelaw resigned from his post as Lord President of the Council, leader of the House of Lords and Deputy Prime Minister on health grounds, after suffering a stroke in December. Lord Belstead was appointed as leader of the Lords (and Lord Privy Seal) and John Wakeham as Lord President but Mrs Thatcher refused to name a new deputy ○

—SIMON HORSFORD



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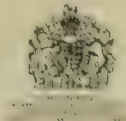
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RUSBRIDGER

Alan Rusbridger harks back to the 60s; toasts the *Beano's* 50th birthday; and tackles O level questions 15 years on

INVARIABLY, I start each year with the fervent hope that there will be nothing to celebrate. But there always is. Barely a week passes now without us all being asked to honour the anniversary (bogus, or not) of some minor poet; of luncheon meat or shoe polish; of the yoyo, a rock album, a television show, the electric carving knife, the baked bean—you name it. I suppose journalists shouldn't complain; it keeps us in copy. But all the same.

This year we celebrate 1968, because it was 20 years ago; and, very probably 1963, because it was 25 years ago. There are at least two 1968 books out already; the new-look *New Statesman* has devoted a supplement in honour of the year. There are doubtless videos, coffee mugs, T-shirts and board games to follow.

Why does the thought of celebrating 1968 deaden the heart so? The answer, I suppose, depends on whether you are at heart a 60s person or not. If you are a 60s person you have to live with the fact that the intervening 20 years have taken everything you stood/fought/sat in/sung and smoked for and stood it plumb on its head. If you are not a 60s person the whole exercise gives off the air of a rather pathetic banquet of self-indulgence over a discredited era.

The litmus test is how you react to a quote from a French school-girl quoted in Ronald Fraser's book, *1968* (Chatto): "I remember after a euphoric night of fighting the police, cars burning in the streets. I crashed out at a friend's in the Latin Quarter. My clothes were reeking of tear gas. In the morning I woke to find an unknown moustached face looking down at me. He asked me to have coffee and we became lovers."

The 60s person finds the pulse quicken at such a passage. For there, in one sentence, is the essence of what it was all about. Fighting the police . . . burning cars . . . tear gas . . . free love. Truly, those were the days.

The non-60s person shudders. Violence . . . confrontation . . . anarchy . . . AIDS.

Sixties people have to live with the knowledge that sex and drugs have gone out of fashion and that rock and roll is today as much the

theme tune of the commodity broker as the anthem of revolution. Sixties people have to live with the disillusion of seeing idols crumble. They have to live with Timothy Leary in three-piece suits preening himself on television chat shows. Non-60s people also have to live with it, only they usually switch over to the snooker.

I find the only pleasure to be gained is the innocent one of re-reading old Paul Johnson articles. Here he is at the height of the Paris uprising in May, 1968, when the air was thick with tear gas and cobblestones: "This is such a rare event in history that we are fortunate to be alive to witness it . . . (the students) are inspired by common attitudes, grievances, disgusts and doctrines which leap across the frontiers . . . Once again, the French have given birth to a new revolutionary spirit which will ultimately enrich the lives of all of us. I would like to think, without much hope, that Britain had a contribution to make."

I haven't seen the old boy penning his thoughts about 1968, but it can only be a matter of time. At least there is one thing to look forward to this year . . .

FEW anniversaries celebrated in 1988 will have quite the same significance as the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the *Beano* on July 30. Like its D. C. Thomson stablemate, Dundee's *Courier and Advertiser*, the magazine is virtually untouched by post-war Britain. Schoolmasters still wear mortarboards. Red Indians still preface every noun with "um". Mums still spend their time having perms and doing housework. Dads are perpetually to be found in V-neck jumpers and bedroom slippers, buried in newspapers. And Dad's bedroom slipper is still the final reward for gross misbehaviour.

Prams are invariably of the four-wheeled coach-built variety. Schoolboys are still given lines when they err. Their desks still have ink-wells in them. "Weedy" is still an unmentionable term of abuse. So is "swot". Posh public schoolboys still wear bow ties and top hats. A water-pistol is still the

ultimate symbol of subversion. The worst violence that befalls anyone is to become embroiled in the ubiquitous quick-setting cement.

I wonder if it has ever occurred to the patrician members of the D. C. Thomson board just how subversive the whole magazine is? Dennis the Menace, Roger the Dodger, the Bash Street Kids, Minnie the Minx, Ivy the Terrible—they are all out, one way or another, to undermine parental and school authority. Anyone attempting to study in class is a figure of fun—Cuthbert, Snotty Simkins or Soppo Walter. It is always the teacher who ends up face down in the mud.

Lord Snooty, the toffee-nosed posh kid, is invariably beset by the Gasworks Gang. Dennis may get the occasional whacking for the humiliations he has inflicted on his father, but there is no doubt whose side we are on. God knows what kids make of it all in 1988, but three cheers for the *Beano* all the same.

ONE of the good things about periodic debates on educational standards is that those of us no longer in shorts can feel pleasantly superior. "Of course the little blighters should learn Latin. Of course they must parse. Spent m' whole childhood conjugating and look at me."

There will be much talk like this as the Baker Bill stumbles its way through Parliament. And so, in smug spirit, I set out to prove to myself what an educated chappie I was.

I chose a simple measure. I went in search of a set of the latest University of London O level papers. The stuff of 15-year-olds. As I recall, I knocked off about 10 of them at the time. Maybe 11, if we are including Art. It is true I did not achieve the very highest grades, but then I am not claiming genius. Merely the kind of all-round honest-to-goodness general education so regrettably lacking in today's youth.

I eventually found bound sets in the London University Senate House. The first paper was Biology—an O level I seem to recall scoring rather well at. Question

one read as follows: "In an amoeba, which of the following carries out osmoregulation: a) contractile vacuole, b) pseudopodium, c) nucleus, d) food vacuole, e) cytoplasm."

Now I propose a policy of total honesty. I am happy to confess my intellectual failings if you are. Very well, shall we pass on to the next question?

This consisted of a line drawing of some sort of cell pretending to be a fried egg, or perhaps vice versa. The question asked of the cell/fried egg: "Is the cell a) turgid, b) dead, c) wilted, d) osmoregulated, e) plasmolysed?" The sort of question, in other words, guaranteed to make any examinee a combination of a) b) and c) and very possibly d) and e) to boot. Well, the mind plays funny tricks after nearly 20 years. We might fare better with History.

Here we are required to write briefly on four of the following: "Wergild; St Dunstan; the Massacre of St Brice's Day; Ranulf Flambard; Strongbow; Earl of Pembroke; Richard I as a crusader; Franciscans and Dominicans in the 13th century; the Battle of Lewes; the deposition of Edward II; the Treaty of Breigny." Struggling? Then try writing just as briefly on any of the following: "The Battle of Barnet; the Amicable Grant; the Treaty of Rueil; the Peace of Nijmegen; the accession of Catherine II of Russia." No good? Then try, without a smirk on your face, to describe the activities which medieval monks were engaged upon a) in the choir, b) in the cloisters, c) in the chapterhouse and d) on the land. You did smirk, admit it.

The novelty soon wears off, no? It is one thing being unable to write briefly; it is quite another not being able to write at all. Was the Amicable Grant an agreeable fellow or the precursor of the Welfare State? Who on earth would have fought a battle in Barnet, of all places? Who, or what or where is wergild? Ditto Ranulf Flambard.

I confess I have just cheated and looked up Grant, Barnet, wergild and Flambard in *Hutchinson's 20th-Century Encyclopedia*. Total blank. Let's move on.

IT'S SILLY TO DRINK YOURSELF

Two alcoholic drinks in the sky have at least the same effect as three at sea-level. (Ask any stewardess.)

Because the atmospheric pressure in an aeroplane is lower than it is on the ground the alcohol gets into the bloodstream faster, and the higher you are the higher you get. (Even in a modern jet, the cabin pressure at 35,000 feet is the same as the outside pressure at about 7,000 feet.)

Alcohol also affects the body's ability to use oxygen efficiently. (So does smoking). And since there's less oxygen floating around in an aircraft cabin, if you get a hangover it's really going to hang around.

So while a few drinks might make you feel all's well in the world, when you get down to earth you won't feel like getting down to business.

EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY*

Even when everything's free, you can end up paying for it later. Studies have shown that in the air most people drink more than they do on the ground: and it's a bit of a vicious circle.

A long flight can get a bit boring, however comfortable it is. The drinks are free and you don't have to move an inch to get one. What's more, just being on a plane makes you thirsty. The humidity in an aircraft is as low as 2% whereas most of us are used to a level of around 30%.

Alcohol is not the solution. You need to drink much more than usual, but more water or fruit juice. And if you need a 'drink' to relax, your meal and drink lots of water or juice in between – and any trips to the loo give you a chance to stretch your limbs.

(Qantas do serve free drinks, of course. And since we do, we think you ought to be offered the best. In fact, Business Traveller Magazine just voted our wines the best in the sky.)

Be careful what you eat, too. People eat on a long flight because it's there as much as from hunger. Or because they're too polite to refuse – even though we prepare special menus for First and Business Class using fresh produce, never frozen. And even though, in First, there's a specially trained Air Chef.)

Above all, don't eat a full meal if your stomach still thinks it's 3 o'clock in the morning. It can't cope.

If you are hungry, avoid gassy foods like onions. The gas in your stomach has already been increased by the decrease in the cabin

 air pressure.  Crossing time zones  confuses the  digestive system  anyway without

Should the temptations prove too great – and here Qantas can only apologize for the high quality of our food and drink – you have been and you'll land in Australia with your head in a state and your stomach in a turmoil. Or vice versa.

STUPID.

AT 35,000 FT, IT'S CRAZY.

DOES IT MATTER WHO YOU FLY WITH?

The effects of drinking or eating too much will be much the same whichever airline you choose. And even if you don't touch a drop and watch what you eat, a flight as long as the one to Australia will still take it out of you because your biological clocks will be so out of time with the local ones.

A relaxed, comfortable flight will help. And so will making sure you don't rush straight into any meetings. (It also makes sense to arrange meetings at times when you'd be awake at home, otherwise you could be at a distinct disadvantage.)

At Qantas, we can't say our seats and our service, or our wine and our food are the best in the sky. Well we can, but you won't believe us until you've flown with us.

But we can say we fly more people to Australia than any other airline.

And we can say that we've been flying longer flights longer than any other airline. (In fact, apart from KLM we've been flying passengers longer than any airline, and we were the first to offer a separate Business Class.)

So if you're going all the way to Australia, try flying with Qantas.

And if you do have a drink on us, remember alcohol and altitude don't make the best cocktail. Because we'd really like you to arrive down under feeling on top.

have a glass or two with

(At Qantas we won't be

 any extra help  from you. 

warned. Overdo it

HIGHLIGHTS



STUART NICOL

La dolce vita: "Gabi" behind slabs of parmesan at I. Camisa & Son, the mouth-watering Italian delicatessen he runs with his brother in Soho

A taste of Italy

A VISIT to I. Camisa & Son allows Italomaniacs to indulge in *la dolce vita* while trekking through the rain in Soho, and treats gourmets and gourmands to the tastier sides of Italian life. This Italian food shop is everything the family-run Mediterranean delicatessen should be. The air hangs heavy with the smell of garlic, strong cheeses and hams; the management shouts; the shelves are cluttered and it is always busy. Early customers buy the crispy Italian bread, a cosmopolitan crowd arrive for the pungent garlic sausages, beating the lunchtime crush when office workers queue for fresh pasta. Those with more time call in the afternoon to debate the finer points of olive oil.

First, however, pasta. This is made in cellars beneath the shop and is not pasteurized so has to be eaten within two days. Camisa's cook, archetypally temperamental, works with three machines. One makes tagliatelle—ribbon-like noodles—with basil, and no other pasta, as this sweet-smelling herb impregnates the whole con-

traption. The other two machines make all sorts of tubes, twists, spaghetti and swirls. Favourite with customers is the tortellini stuffed with spinach and light, white ricotta cheese. Unlike tortellini available in many of the new fresh pasta shops which have cropped up recently, Camisa's is generally plain and white rather than green and made with spinach. Neither do Camisa make whole-wheat pasta which to Italians, who like their pasta to be extremely light and not weighed down with roughage, seems a contradiction in terms.

After pasta, consider the ceilings hung with cured meats, hams, pigs' trotters, salamis and sausages, including hare sausages—gamey and very rich. Wild boar is especially popular and available both fresh and tinned.

Choosing olive oils here is like choosing whisky. They have, of course, the popular blended varieties in jars and large one gallon tins. They also have unblended varieties, including Olio d'Uiva, made from olives all from the

same grove, or non-filtered oils, only for true *aficionados* as they are extremely strong.

This month Camisa start selling *colomba*, Italy's traditional Easter cake. It is a light, dry sponge, dusted in sugar and fragrant with vanilla. It is similar to the Christmas cake, *panettone*, most popular varieties of which are stocked all year, along with *panforte*. First made in Siena in the Middle Ages, *panforte* is a densely rich cake, flat, hard and studded with almonds and citrus rinds, bound together with honey.

Finally, a mouth-watering miscellany: jars of truffles, the king

of fungi, freshly imported parmesan, standing like great slabs of concrete which you grate for yourself at home; luxurious buffalo milk mozzarella; *arborio* rice for making the perfect risotto. (Unusually firm and not too fluffy, it can be served piled high into a cone.) Here, too, are jars of fruit mustard—apricots and cherries in syrup for eating with cold meats—and tins of tomatoes galore, which in this setting throw off school dinner associations and seem like an exotic treat ○

—SARAH FOOT

Camisa & Son, 61 Old Compton St, W1

Pioneer photographer

MARGARET HARKER, the photographic historian and chronicler of the Linked Ring, Britain's association of "pictorialist photographers", has organized an exhibition of the work of Henry Peach Robinson at the Barbican Centre. Towards the end of his life Robinson became a founder member of the Linked Ring, having probably been the most

influential pictorialist photographer and writer on photography in 19th-century England.

From the beginning photography and painting had always had an anxious, sometimes hysterical relationship. Paul Delaroche, the history painter who exclaimed "From today painting is dead!" when he heard of Daguerre's invention, was surely



Sleep, 1867, a composite print from four negatives by Henry Peach Robinson, whose work is on show at the Barbican from February 25

being a little premature, not to say rather silly. Curiously, four of his students became good photographers without trying to emulate or replace painting. Photography did not seem to need to do so during its first decade when the intrinsic and miraculous qualities of the medium seemed sufficient. Then, with the finer definition obtainable with the wet collodion negative in conjunction with the albumen print, and the development of combination printing (at first to obtain a more realistic relationship between skies and the earth or sea), someone was bound to manipulate the medium for "artistic" and "moral" ends.

Peach Robinson had started as a painter as well as working in the printing and book trades. He exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1852, the year he made his first photographs. In 1857 he opened his first photographic studio.

He was a capable portraitist but soon began to contrive his often sentimental photo-montages, of which the most famous early one is *Fading Away*. This shows a young girl dying in a comfortable sitting room attended by two women with the back view of a man—supposedly the doctor—gazing

hopelessly out of the window. At the time it must have seemed as affecting as a scene from a popular novel and one can imagine that those who had hitherto found photography mechanical and unfeeling might have welcomed Robinson's cottage interiors and solemn rural charades as evidence that "higher purpose" was not beyond reach for the still youthful medium.

The question to be decided at the Barbican is whether the pictures will ever seem more than risible Victorian curiosities. The idea of Robinson finding farm workers of both sexes not competent enough actors for his idylls of honest labour and having to use middle-class friends—dressing them up in borrowed clothes—seems horribly funny. Still, Robinson was a good craftsman and a truly Victorian enthusiast.

It is strange, though, to think of him as an ancestor of Moholy-Nagy and John Heartfield. The *British Journal* gives us a marvellous "composite" print of him. "... when he is angry he is nearly always wrong, but relying on a vigorous and dashing onslaught he seeks to annihilate his opponents. . . His originality, his

boundless admiration of himself, his apparently firm belief that photography was invented expressly for his own especial benefit, and his bluff geniality are as refreshing, after intercourse with ordinary mortals, as a breeze

from the ocean . . ."

I will be grateful to Professor Harker if she manages to wipe the respectful smirk off my face and I am certain that the show will be well worth looking at ○

BRUCE BERNARD

Vein of intelligence

London 100 years ago: *ILN*, February 4, 1888

It is stated that a doctor has just saved the life of a female patient who was sinking from exhaustion, by the transfusion into her system of his own blood. There are those, no doubt, who will ascribe this victory to Homoeopathy, but the good doctor was certainly an Allopath in practice, since he gave her no less than 4 ounces of the restorative in question . . . The experiment of transfusion was first tried, according to Buffon, in the middle of the 17th century, when the blood of a sheep was injected into the veins of an idiot, with the effect of sharpening his wits; on the second application of the remedy, how-

ever, "he died lethargic". In 1665 Messrs Lower and King performed a similar operation upon a "literary gentleman", who had offered himself voluntarily for treatment, at first "with a satisfactory result—" (we are not told what it was, whether it multiplied his ideas or only improved his style); but in this case, too, a second experiment "proved disastrous". It seems strange that these scientific individuals should have gone to the sheep, of all animals, for the improvement of the human intelligence. One would have thought a bagged fox would have suited them better.

—JAMES PAYN



Lenny Henry (in hat) in the Sudan where he appears in the BBC Comic Relief show for famine aid

Comic aid for African famine

FEBRUARY 5 has been designated "National Red Nose Day", when everybody in the UK is expected to sport a scarlet hooter. It is rumoured that Melvyn Bragg will lead the way, and that several MPs will be taking their seats in the House of Commons suitably attired.

If it sounds a little silly, then don't worry—it's all for a good cause. The event is the brainchild of Comic Relief, a loose grouping

of (mainly alternative) comedy writers and performers, including Ben Elton, Rowan Atkinson, Lenny Henry and the Comic Strip team, and money raised from the sale of noses and other Relief activities will be used to help victims of the African famine. It looks as if it is coming just at the right time: if predictions are correct, 1988 will be a very bad year for Sudan and Ethiopia. That, sadly, is no joke.

Comic Relief first came together in 1986 as a direct response to news of the appalling African disaster. The first project to bring them widespread public attention was a record, the extraordinary version of "Living Doll" by Cliff Richard and the Young Ones, which shot straight to number one and grossed over £270,000. Other events included a live show, a video and a book, which together resulted in first-year takings of £1

million—all channelled through such agencies as Oxfam and Save the Children to the worst affected areas.

This year Comic Relief will be even more spectacular. As well as red noses, there will be a six—yes, six—hour show on BBC1 showcasing the best in British comedy and featuring some specially commissioned sketches. Like the format for Live Aid, it will mix entertainment with harrowing documentary footage from refugee camps and aid centres. Both Lenny Henry and Griff Rhys Jones have visited the famine areas in recent months, and reports from them will be included throughout the evening. The link between belly-laughs and filling bellies in Africa will therefore be a constant feature, and viewers will be encouraged to pledge money on the night.

It's not new for comedy to involve itself with social concerns—the various "Secret Policeman's Balls" in aid of Amnesty International have proved its effectiveness as a vehicle for mounting a single-issue campaign. What makes the Comic Relief day different is both its alternative flavour—the humour will be far removed from that on show at the average Variety Club event—and the scale on which it is being attempted. Red noses might go back to Coco the Clown, but the comedy will be up to date and the issues as pressing as ever ○

—CHRIS RILEY

House of intrigue

ITS "CURIO CABINET" alone would make Southside House on Wimbledon Common one of London's most intriguing places. It contains the pearl necklace that fell from Marie Antoinette's head upon her execution; Charles I's diamond ring worn at the Battle of Naseby; blades of grass from the Culloden battlefield; Anne Boleyn's comb and vanity case from the Tower of London; and many more rattling items such as the rather withered cough drops used at Southside one frosty morning by the Prince of Wales who would become Edward VII.

The story of these splendid curios is the story of the Pennington family, the owners of Southside since its construction in 1687. The initial Pennington was Robert, a close ally of Charles I,

which explains the diamond ring. During Cromwell's Commonwealth, Pennington lay low in the Netherlands. With the Restoration, he returned to London and was living happily in the City until the Great Plague. His young son died, so he moved his family into the deep countryside that was Wimbledon. Well settled here, he employed a couple of Dutch architects to build Southside House.

One family member was to marry a descendant of Anne Boleyn, which explains the comb and vanity case. Another Pennington married Lady Mary, heiress of the controversial Philip, Duke of Wharton who had used Southside House as a hideout when outlawed on two counts: one for actively supporting the Young

Pretender, the second for his deep enthusiasm for black-magic rituals, a subject the family would rather not talk about even now. Many tokens of Wharton are here, including a portrait of himself dressed mischievously in a nightcap.

Then there was John Pennington who, at 16 years of age, went to work at the British Embassy in Paris just as the French Revolution was exploding. He soon met a Joséphine de Beauharnais who kept bringing her endangered friends to the safety of the Embassy and the personal protection of young Pennington. Imagine his surprise when he read of her marriage to Napoleon Bonaparte.

She invited John round to the Boney home at Malmaison and, as a gesture of thanks, presented him with the Marie Antoinette pearl necklace. She explained that she had had an earlier liaison (and a

different political inclination) with a M Barras, the revolutionary government representative at Marie's execution. He had picked up the necklace afterwards and at dinner that night presented it—suitably washed clean of the queen's blood—to Joséphine as a gift.

In her turn, she presented it to John Pennington. He protested that she should surely keep such a souvenir. She explained how Napoleon would not have it in the house. His reaction when first shown it was: "Ah! ça non! Ça non!". And that was how this necklace came to be in SW19 ○

—DAVID BRAZIL

There is more, much more, to Southside House, open for afternoon tours on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from October 1 to March 31. Special-request visits can be arranged through The Administrator, Pennington-Mellor Charity Trust, Southside House, Wimbledon Common, SW19 (946 7643).

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London's hall of fame

THE LATE Peter Sellers once set his heart on restoring London's oldest surviving music hall, Wilton's, off Cable Street in Whitechapel. At the time he was involved with Liza Minnelli, who flounced into the dilapidated but perfectly preserved building declaring that she would do the opening show. That was nearly 20 years ago.

The long-running saga of Wilton's and its restoration is a bureaucratic soap opera of its own making, with a star-studded cast of Spike Milligan, John Betjeman, Marius Goring, Laurence Olivier and Ken Livingstone. Over the years the project has generated an inordinate amount of hot air.

However, things are starting to move. Brian Daubney, a former television director, says it will take only another £250,000 to complete restoration of the building. Daubney is the prime mover behind the London Music Hall Trust which has raised the £500,000 already spent on Wilton's. In addition to substantial grants from the London borough of Tower Hamlets, London

Docklands Development Corporation and English Heritage, the Trust has raised money by letting Wilton's out to the BBC for an adaptation of *Bleak House* and to Frankie Goes to Hollywood for their controversial *Relax* video, among others.

Wilton's opened in 1859, taking its name from a wealthy publican, John Wilton, whose bar and music room were so successful that he decided to create a purpose-built music hall which became one of the most popular in London. Wilton's attracted top-notch acts and was particularly popular for its bar built of mahogany, the first of its kind in London.

Alas, the bar is no more but the imposing Italianate interior, with its arches and balconies, remains remarkably intact. The music hall has been rated the most important building in England as far as popular entertainment is concerned. In its heyday there was no need for dressing rooms because the stars would just turn up, do their bit and then move on to their next engagement.

It was not uncommon for



Wilton's, London's oldest surviving music hall, now under restoration

operatic stars to nip across from Covent Garden after a performance and unwind at Wilton's with a little light operetta. Brian Daubney intends to invite Kiri Te Kanawa among others to revive this tradition. Dressing rooms will be fitted this time round.

Fire and safety regulations were often flouted by Victorian entrepreneurs and it was not unusual for Wilton's to cram 2,000 people in for a session, the vast majority drinking and smoking. The limit in our safety-conscious times would be 450.

Clearly, with that kind of capacity Wilton's could not be made to pay for itself, so Daubney plans to create "Wilton's World" in close proximity, a £10 million scheme to include a music-hall museum and imaginative re-creations of the area's colourful history. Daubney regales the listener with tales of sugar refineries, architectural follies, tropical animals shipped in to the Victorian docks, the first cable railway, and how Nell Gwynn kept her oranges fresh. He is quite a turn himself ○

—NICK SMURTHWAITE

Coward at Christie's

NOËL COWARD a painter? Surely not. We have heard all too much from his hagiographic admirers about the so-called Master's fabulous versatility, which inspired him to range lavishly from plays and the singing and composing of songs to poems and short stories, but who remembers that Coward was also a dedicated and prolific weekend painter for more than 30 years? Those of us out of the know will be amazed to discover that 30 of his paintings which he kept at his home in Switzerland will be sold at Christie's on February 18. And they are confidently expected to gross about £300,000 for the Noël Coward Trust.

Christie's, with an unbelievable mixture of cheek and marketing hyperbole, assert that as a painter Coward "deserves a place in the mainstream of modern British art", and invoke comparisons with Lowry, Hockney and Nash. This is rather rich, or will be if Christie's manage to realize that £300,000, since most of these paintings sug-

gest that Coward the painter had little more than a talent to divert. His pictures are appealing; they are colourful and competent, but that is all.

Coward himself, never a man afraid to blow his own trumpet

when others refused to touch the instrument, had a pleasingly modest view of his work. In the 1950s, when his reputation was rather in the doldrums, a number of Coward's smaller works were exhibited in a London gallery. He wrote in his diary "although there is a certain flair for decorative design in my paintings. . . I am not really good enough yet for an

exhibition". But he did qualify this belittling dismissal with one of his predictable swipes at modernism: "Compared to some of the pretentious muck that is shown month after month in the London galleries, my amateur efforts appear brilliant. . . and do at least convey a fantasized impression of Jamaica."

Indeed so. His views of the Jamaican beach promenade manifest delight in a bright, luxurious mixture of colours. The pictures teem with people—tiny, almost matchstick figures—each one meticulously individualized. But despite the way in which these figures are packed close together, there is none of Lowry's abiding atmosphere of loneliness and isolation in the midst of the crowd. In *The Two Nuns* (left) Coward's quirky humour finds the pictorial equivalent of his stage work. Two black-habited women stand primly with clasped hands, outsiders among a sea of revellers.

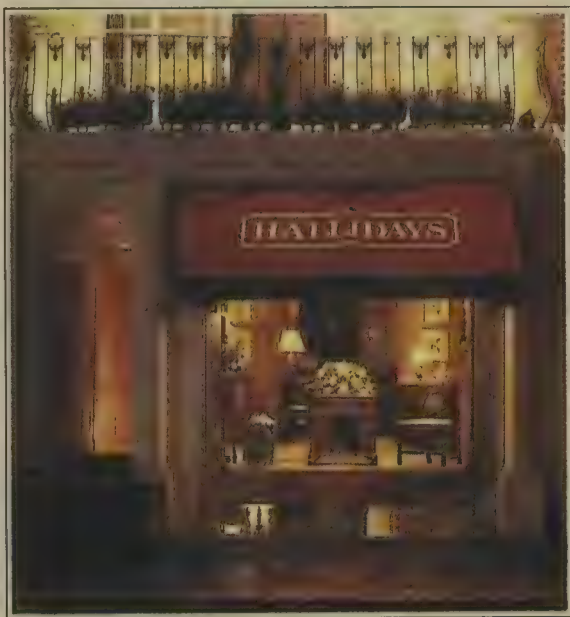
In 1955 Coward predicted that "celebrity snobbism" would ensure he sold. Over 30 years on, his work is likely to fetch a small fortune ○

—NICHOLAS DE JONGH

Noël Coward's *The Two Nuns* is to be sold at Christie's this month



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Great London inventions

MANY ARE the ways in which we may measure the genius of London, its great inventions for a start. Inventions that have made all our lives more interesting, more meaningful. We are talking about amazing breakthroughs and sensational concepts here. Yet London is too modest, it does not proclaim its achievements loudly enough. It is time to take a stand. Let all other places take heed. Would a full life be possible without the following...?

The Christmas cracker. Or more precisely that thin strip that does the cracking. The year was 1860, the place Tom Smith's "fancy goods" shop in Goswell Road, EC1. He had finally cracked it. Gazing at the logs in his fire in the room above the shop and observing their crack and snap gave him the idea for a saltpetre friction strip that would make his "cos-aques" much more fun. Poor Tom died just eight years later, but his sons continued to perfect cracker technology to become the British market leaders. The company is now based in Norwich and makes some 50 million Christmas crackers a year.

The Teasmade. The first all-electric, automatic tea-making machine came in 1934 through the endeavours of William Thornton at his South Ealing home. It was marketed by Goblins of Leatherhead under the trade name "Teasmade". The first ones used a clock

to tip a time switch to turn on a small kettle element to boil the water and syphon it out into an adjacent teapot. The transfer of the water's weight switched off the kettle and turned on an electric light over the clock. A model of this splendid machine is now in the Science Museum.

The vacuum cleaner. This glorious first for London sprang from a lunch in an Italian restaurant at Victoria—now a "Big 'Uns Ribs" joint. Engineer Charles Booth was being told of a new American cleaning machine. He disputed its basic principle, insisting that it should suck rather than blow. To prove his point he took out his handkerchief, put it over his mouth and sucked in the dust on the back of his chair. He nearly choked in the process, but his white hanky now had a dark rim and he was triumphant. He rushed back to his office in Victoria Street and set about creating his "Puffing Billy" machine. This was unveiled to the enthusiastic press in August that year and Booth's Vacuum Cleaner Co Ltd was on its way.

The John Collins cocktail. This splendid gin concoction was devised in the 1860s by John Collins, the head bartender at Limmer's Hotel on Conduit Street, a shady institution alas long gone. The cocktail achieved immediate fame; Mrs Beeton included its recipe in her awesome household management book.

Soft lavatory paper. This emerged in 1936, invented by 20-year-old Ronnie Kent. It flopped. A form of crinkly crêpe paper, it displeased the British nation which regarded the stuff as namby-pamby, probably foreign and not a patch on their favoured Bronco/Izal. Ronnie's breakthrough came at a workshop on St Andrew's Road in Walthamstow—and this inspired his choice of brandname, Andrex. It became popular only after the war when an ingenious advertising campaign endeared the softer stuff to the nation, which may link to Britain's decline. These days 98 per cent of British loo paper is soft. The battle is well won.

The flushing lavatory. This was well ahead of its time. Sir John Harington, a godson of Queen Elizabeth I, devised a perfect system in 1596. Queen Bess herself was thrilled with the invention and had one installed in Richmond Palace. It is long disappeared, as has most of Richmond Palace. This brilliant invention vanished from history for nearly 200 years. Its rediscovery had to await the arrival of the sewers.

Table tennis. The precise invention of this horribly familiar game is contested but, on points, credit must go to James Gibb, a Croydon engineer, whose game of lawn tennis was disrupted by a downpour. So he brought the game indoors and onto the dining table, using cigar-case lids as bats and shaped champagne corks as balls. A patent was registered in 1891 in the name "Gossima". In 1900 the

name Ping Pong was adopted and the next year the laws of table tennis were codified.

Sewer gas lighting. I admit this didn't really catch on but at one stage it seemed a sensible way of lighting up London's streets. In 1895 J. E. Webb patented his method and had soon sold 2,500 of his lamps all around the world as city fathers woke up to this cheap and novel form of energy. But there were too many problems with the technology for it to achieve world domination—leaks and explosions, that kind of thing. London preserved one as a souvenir. It is in Carting Lane just behind the Savoy Theatre, off the Strand. It still runs on gas but safe household gas. The Savoy Hotel's sewers are no longer required.

The Maxim machine gun. Hiram Maxim was an inspired American inventor. At a Paris electrical exhibition in 1881 he was given a piece of advice by a fellow American. "Hang your chemistry and electricity! If you want to make a pile of money, invent something that will enable these Europeans to cut each others' throats with greater facility!" Hiram took this advice to heart. He set up a workshop at 57 Hatton Garden and by the spring of 1884 his Maxim machine gun was ready. The armies of most nations queued up for their Maxims. Hiram became a naturalized British citizen and received a knighthood. A blue plaque at Hatton Garden notes the precise location of his invention ○

—DAVID BRAZIL

Pavement posers

SOME GO to London's South Bank for the culture, others for the concrete. While fans of classical music enjoy a concert in the Purcell Room, the sweeping expanse of smooth cement directly beneath it is the ideal venue for a pastime last seen in England exactly a decade ago. Skateboarding is back, and it is causing the sort of commotion that the manufacturers of those other forgotten fads—hula-hoops and pogo-sticks—have been trying to generate for years.

This new wave is coming primarily out of the London fashion scene. As the impact of hip-hop begins to fade, so skateboarding

and its attendant lifestyle—another American import—is filling the void. The boards themselves have become fashion accessories, often decorated with gaudy tattoo-style dragons, skulls and snakes, while the required clothing—brightly coloured T-shirts and shorts with matching knee- and elbow-pads—is now *de rigueur*. There are also "skate bands" like the highly-touted Stupids, who write songs about the joys of "sidewalk surfing". They have created a following for skateboarding to the point where it has infiltrated some of London's more avant-garde nightclubs: the Delerium recently had ramps erected around its dance floor for fearless clubbers to try.

The average "skate rebel" these days is in his 20s, and pretty well off. He has to be: boards are generally bought on a component

basis like a hi-fi and the complete package can cost up to £150. To take into account the extra weight of an adult, the boards are now bigger and stronger, reminiscent of a surfboard.

Paul Sunman runs London's first specialist skateboard shop,

Skateboarding takes off again



Slam City, in Portobello Road. As a veteran of the first wave he is aware that whereas 10 years ago the phenomenon was so commercial the boards were here before the demand, this time it is the other way round. Business is booming and the shop even boasts a tool-rack so that enthusiasts can drop in and fix their boards.

Sunman sees skateboarding as more of a sport than a fashion fad. That is why Slam City turned down the opportunity to stage an evening at the Limelight club, and instead have put nearly £4,000 towards constructing the best skate-ramp in Europe, under the Westway in Latimer Road. With rumours that there are plans to build a shopping complex under the Purcell Room, Sunman is sure that this kind of serious promotion is the way forward ○

—ROGER SABIN

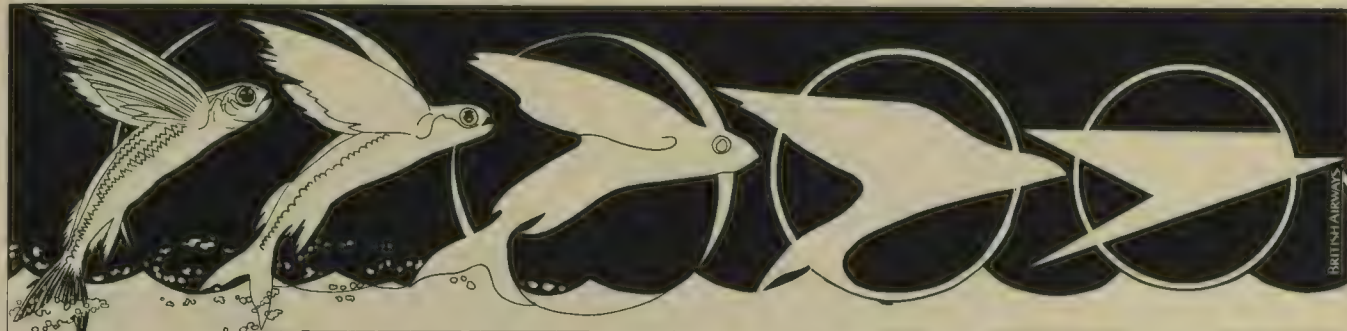
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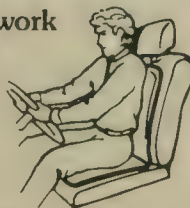
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50 WAYS TO IMPROVE LONDON

Perhaps it is something to do with the weather at this time of year. There is a sense of routine and an absence of joy about the capital. This is sad, because London is still one of the most civilized cities in the world. It is relatively peaceful, it is orderly and it is dignified. It even has its moments.

But we lack the *joie de vivre* of Paris and the chutzpah of New York. Somehow London seems, well, dull. There are many small changes that could be made to the city to enliven the spirit of Londoners; many innovations that would ease the sometimes trying business of living in London. There is so much potential in the place, so much bureaucracy to be dismantled, so many unnecessary restrictions to be swept away, so many views to be improved, so much history to be appreciated.

In short, London resembles nothing so much as one of its many commuters, a man who has a sense of both enjoyment and humour but who conceals it beneath the uniform grey of his business suit. If only the city would make more of itself: take more pride in its appearance and fulfil its incredible potential.

We set about finding ways of improving life in London and consulted many people who feel, like us, that the city is in danger of stagnating.

Some of our ideas are too fantastic for immediate implementation and, naturally, not all our contributors' suggestions were workable.

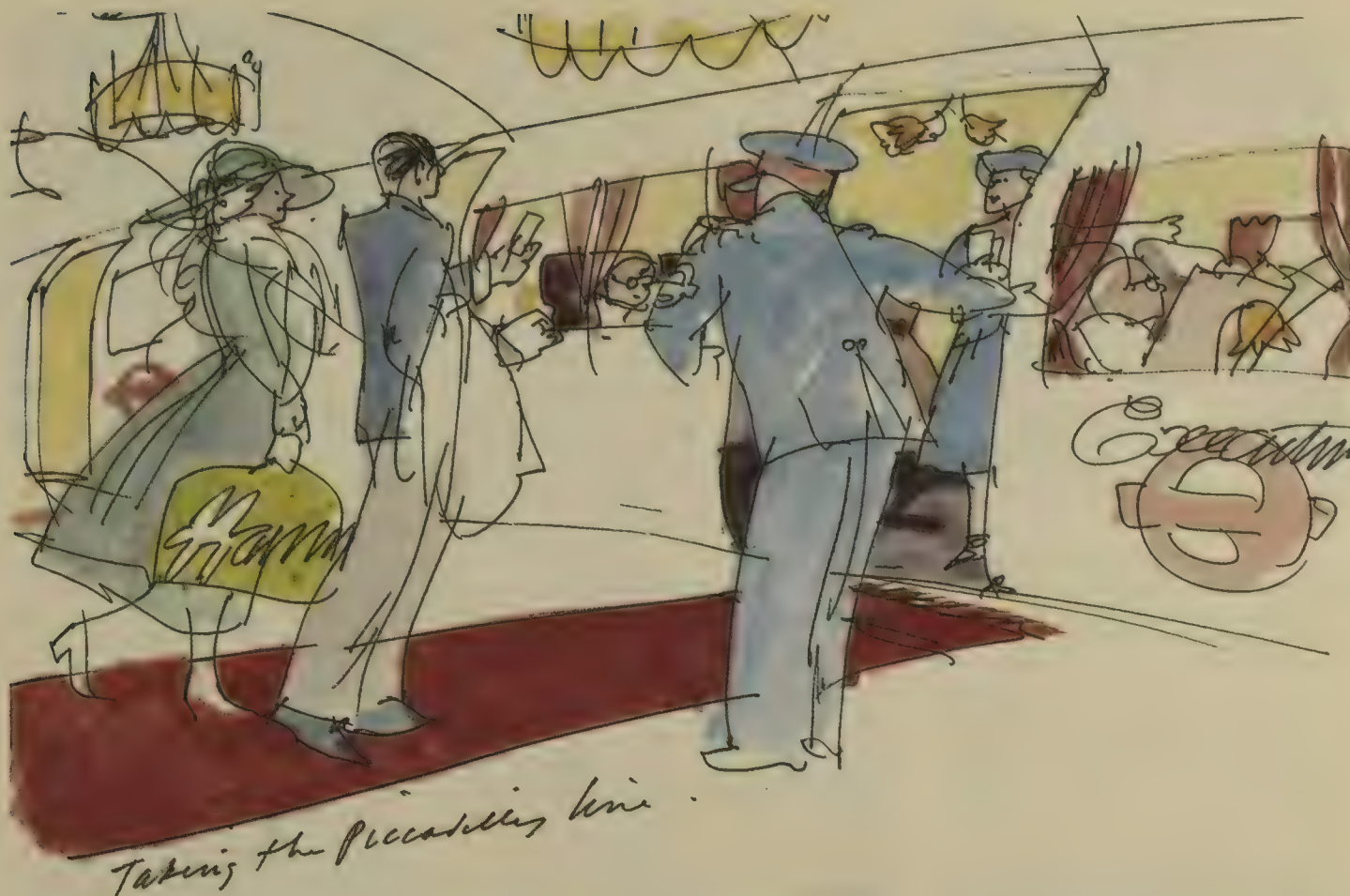
We decided to exclude Laurie Lee's plea for licensed brothels (made, selflessly, for the enjoyment of others) and Melvyn Bragg's suggestion that all tower blocks should be painted in pastel shades. The latter also wanted to round up London's tramps and park-bench tipplers and place them in a comfortable compound each day. He emphasized the word comfortable, but we felt the conditions would soon degenerate and make the inmates' lives intolerable.

However frivolous some of our ideas may seem, they are designed to create an atmosphere of possibility and fun.

We have not addressed the great social problems of homelessness and poverty, which exist in every large city, for these are much more serious questions and they require radical change. This, however, does not invalidate our ideas.

There are certainly many more. This is just a start.

Perhaps you would like to contribute further suggestions. But they must be made in a positive spirit. Complaints about London's traffic and its squalor are simply not good enough. Every idea must be creative and original. A case of Lanson champagne will be given for the best.



Taking the Piccadilly line

1 TO CIVILIZE THE UNDERGROUND In the first stages of our benevolent dictatorship at London Regional Transport we would impose an immediate ban on Walkmans of every description while they continue to leak an irritating semblance of music to other passengers. (This would be followed by a similar ban for all bus and lift passengers.) This ban would be enforced by a jamming device fitted to all Underground rolling stock.

Our next step would be to outlaw eating and drinking on the tube, which has reached epidemic proportions. Passengers would be forced to consume their Casey Jones burger and Wendy milkshake before they buy a ticket.

On a more positive note we would introduce a number of recorded announcements made by well known voices from the British stage. We feel that Lord Olivier's tones welcoming you to Leicester Square might be rather more enjoyable than the mumblings of some of nature's less natural broadcasters.

We would also introduce screens to show excerpts from current films and plays running in the West End, and they would be used to illustrate exhibitions and give details of forthcoming events too.

We would paint the tube rolling stock in the colours of its line. So the Circle line trains would be yellow, the Piccadilly blue and the unfortunate Metropolitan a sickly purple.

We recommend the introduction of a ticket system similar to that found on the Paris Métro where machines are used for checking and collecting tickets. London Underground is beginning to modernize its service with sophisticated ticket machines, and has plans to install checking machines at some stations by the end of 1989. The new scheme, however, should be implemented at all tube stations and the use of high automatic doors, as opposed to

low barriers, would also make it more difficult to fare-dodge and might help recoup part of the £20 million lost each year through ticket evasion. This greater efficiency would mean that ticket collectors could either be employed on the tubes as inspectors or to clean and maintain these refurbished stations.

2 TO REPLACE FALLEN TREES WITH GINKGOS London lost hundreds of thousands of trees in the great storm of October 16. Many of them were planes, which tend to become top-heavy with age. It costs about £100 to supply and plant a tree in a London street, so their replacement needs to be done with care. Lord Aberconway, President-Emeritus of the Royal Horticultural

Society, has proposed that the *Ginkgo biloba*, or maidenhair tree, should be planted in preference to planes, being hardy, long-lived, elegant and turning gold in autumn. It is the sole survivor of a family of trees which flourished more than 200 million years ago. More recently it has proved itself an ideal street tree, as New York has already discovered, but we should plant only the male of the species. The fruit on female ginkgo trees is foul-smelling, particularly when it has dropped and is trodden on, and the seeds are slimy. Where larger trees are required, as in Hyde Park or along the Embankment, the *Platanus pyramidalis*, which is a narrow-spreading form of London plane, would be more suitable.



A *Ginkgo biloba*, or maidenhair tree, at Kew

3 TO CREATE AN AREA OF LATE-NIGHT PAVEMENT CAFÉS IN CENTRAL LONDON One of the great frustrations of central London is the absence of an area where people can stroll about and sit at cafés late in the evening. It is almost unbelievable that since the First World War, when the licensing laws were introduced, Londoners have been forced out of all drinking establishments, however civilized, at 11.30pm.

What we want is an area of licensed cafés, spreading on to the pavements, organized along Continental lines. These, unlike the few approximations to them that are already here, would be genuinely happy—and legally entitled—to serve their late-night customers with an espresso and a *digestif*.

The area must be close enough to theatre-land to feel part of the West End. Soho, which has made commendable efforts to clean itself up, has little room. Neither has Covent Garden. The ideal location is probably north of Soho—not much of a walk—in what is currently rag-trade land on the north side of Oxford Street.



The only British-born Pope, Adrian IV

4 TO BUILD A MEMORIAL TO NICHOLAS BRAKESPEARE Mr Brakespeare was the only Pope to have been born in Britain. His pontificate ran from 1154 to 1159, a period of great turbulence in the Church. This is lamentably recalled by a stone monument in a grass verge in Bedmont High Street, Abbots Langley, near Rickmansworth, which is only a little more impressive than a manhole cover.

It is not as if the present memorial records his life with any accuracy. It is vague about the date of his birth, which it estimates to be AD 1100, and it is not sure on which farm in which part of the parish he was actually born. Brakespeare was an interesting cove; he had no wish to travel to Europe and did so only when the monastery at St Albans turned down his application to become a monk. It seems that he disliked his time in Rome, although he rose rapidly to high office, but he did enjoy snubbing the new Abbot of St Albans when he appeared in the capital to pay his respects. Adrian IV (as Mr Brakespeare became) departed this life in 1159 after a severe bout of tonsillitis.

5 TO ENFORCE THE WEARING OF SHIRTS IN PUBLIC PLACES The male beer belly has never been an attractive sight and it is little improved by being presented in its naked form to the citizens of London. It generally makes its first appearance

in late spring, attached to hardy northern football fans visiting town for their team's FA Cup semi-final and frequently embellished by tattoos. As the summer progresses it becomes increasingly unappealing, usually being sunburnt a blotchy pink.

Public houses already insist on the wearing of shirts and there is no reason why Londoners of aesthetic conviction should not do the same.

A by-law will suffice, enabling the victims of this exhibitionism in parks and streets to seek the assistance of police officers in inviting offenders to replace their shirts. Labourers genuinely involved in labouring works will be exempt on the basis of custom and practice.

6 TO ENCOURAGE MORE FIREWORK DISPLAYS London needs more firework displays. In France, Spain and Italy fireworks are an important part of the Catholic baroque tradition and signal important saints' days. And in Japan firework competitions are held, each contestant striving to impress with half an hour of extravagant pyrotechnics. But in Britain only one night a year is officially set apart for firework displays.

Linda McFadyen, who organizes events at the South Bank Centre, is convinced that fireworks are the best way of celebrating every major event, and is including them in the Winter's End celebration on March 26 and in the Sounds Unusual Festival at the beginning of July. Awkward safety restrictions can usually be overcome by using Thames barges as a platform for the fireworks. It only remains to find sponsorship for a full-scale competition.

7 MORE INSCRIPTIONS ON STREETS AND BUILDINGS How do you add interest to London's streets and buildings, inspire its pedestrians and traffic-bound motorists, and bring alive its rich literary heritage all in one go? Easy—you spangle the city with words. Featureless monoliths, bare pavements and dreary walkways could be greatly improved if they were inscribed with relevant extracts from novels, plays and poetry. Stamped in concrete, carved in stone, turning every stroll into a literary adventure, these would certainly prove more stimulating than the familiar road signs, adverts and graffiti.

There is no shortage of suitable passages. In



More firework displays on the Thames

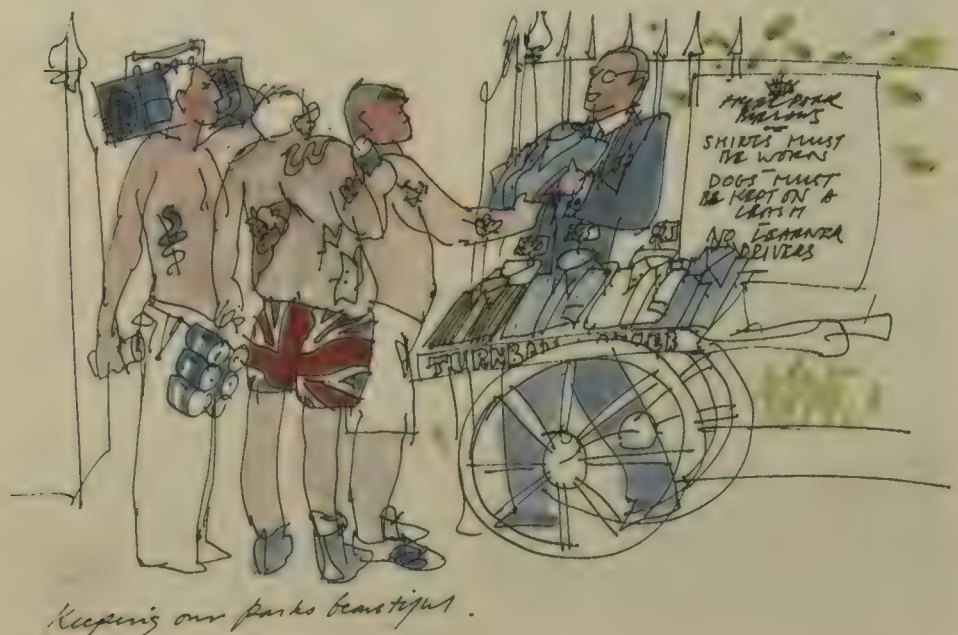
Dickens alone there are probably enough to pepper London from Richmond to Greenwich. The one that follows, from *Our Mutual Friend*, though rather less specific than many, would grace almost any building in the city: "It was a foggy day in London, and the fog was heavy and dark. Animate London, with smarting eyes and irritated lungs, was blinking, wheezing and choking; inanimate London was a sooty spectre, divided in purpose between being visible and invisible, and so being wholly neither. Gaslights flared in the shops with a haggard and unblest air . . . the whole metropolis was a heap of vapour charged with muffled sound of wheels, and enfolding a gigantic catarrh."

Of all London's landmarks, its bridges are among the most celebrated. London Bridge has its own nursery rhyme, of course, Westminster Bridge has Wordsworth's sonnet, and for Blackfriars there is a little George Eliot. These lines from *Daniel Deronda*, engraved, perhaps, at the foot of one of the semi-circular seats which jut out over the river, would show modern Londoners just how little the view from the bridge has changed over the last 100 years: "Leaning on the parapet of Blackfriars Bridge, and gazing meditatively, the breadth and calm of the river, with its long vista half hazy, half luminous, the grand dim masses or tall forms of buildings which were the signs of world-commerce, the oncoming of boats and barges from the still distance into sound and colour, entered into his mood and blent themselves indistinguishably with his thinking . . ."

Extracts from works which never mention London at all, or from those which were written before it was even dreamt of, could also be used—as long as they are relevant to their location. Thus we could see psalms in the pavements of Ludgate Hill on the way to St Paul's, Confucius and Lao Tzu in Chinatown, and on Greek Street a sprinkling of Plato.

8 TO EMBELLISH THE BANKS OF THE THAMES We propose a number of platforms cantilevered over the Thames which would support walkways, restaurants, bandstands and shops. The first site that we suggest for such a project would be the north bank of the river at the bottom of Villiers Street, which leads south from the Strand past Charing Cross station. But there is no reason why this should not extend along other parts of the northern bank. (The southern bank in our scheme for London will be improved by a series of astounding classical vistas.) Our objective is to give Londoners and indeed visitors to the city somewhere from which to appreciate one of the greatest rivers in the world.

The piers manager of Thames Water is scornful of such a scheme and immediately





let them have plaques.

rejects its feasibility by citing, with a certain bureaucratic delight, the problems caused by strong tides and storm pipes. The deputy chairman of Thames Water, Sir Christopher Leaver, who is also chairman of the London Tourist Board, disagrees with his own official, at least on the subject of the proposed new Westminster pier, currently up for approval by the Secretary of State for the Environment. This plan calls for a traditional Victorian steel and glass structure, which would be in sympathy with its surroundings. If this can be built there is no reason why our more ambitious plan could not also be constructed.

9 EXTENSION TO THE BLUE PLAQUE SCHEME While the Blue Plaque scheme commemorating worthy figures from the past is commendable, we believe that it should be extended to mark places of more contemporary interest and individuals and events that are more exciting. So, as well as Sir John Soane, Carlyle and Dickens, there would also be plaques (in yellow) recalling the deeds of Mick Jagger, Lord Lucan and Mandy Rice Davies—plaques in Chelsea commemorating an arrest, in Belgravia commemorating a murder, and in Marylebone commemorating a meeting of the minds.

These plaques would not necessarily have to be limited to recent events. Surely we should be reminded about Casanova's visit to London, and it would be intriguing to know the whereabouts of Colonel Blood's house (the man who stole the Crown Jewels).

Nor do they have to be limited to individuals. There should be a plaque, for example, to commemorate 25 years of *Private Eye* lunches at the Coach and Horses pub in Greek Street, Soho. And why not a plaque on the zebra crossing in Abbey Road where the Beatles were photographed for the album of that name?

10 TO ERECT MANY MORE FOUNTAINS One of the joys of Continental cities are the wonderful fountains. If only London was endowed with a fraction of the great fountains of Rome. In their place we have to put up with the miserable apologies in Trafalgar Square and their counterpart in Leicester Square which has been filled in and planted with municipal geraniums; its dolphins are stranded in top soil. Even in Hyde Park water no longer cascades into the marble basin below the bronze Diana.

The list of missing spouts and plugged jets is endless. The new fountain at the Shell Centre, near Waterloo Bridge, a 15 ton bronze cast in 104 separate sections, has never been switched on because it would splash people.

The first part of our proposal is to make it a statutory offence for anyone responsible for a fountain to turn it off; the second is to give the Fountain Society 25 sites in central London. These will include a fountain in Parliament Square, which apparently is to be known as The Queen's Fountain, but could also commemorate all the wets in the House of Commons; a fountain sending water cascading down the Duke of York steps beside the Mall, and another at the base of Cleopatra's Needle.

11 TO REMOVE ALL "NUCLEAR FREE ZONE" SIGNS Over the last decade some 16 barmy London boroughs have declared themselves Nuclear Free Zones, and proclaimed it on every spare lamp-post in their domain. This is obviously fatuous since no hostile missile will distinguish one area of London from another. Besides, no London borough can ever claim to be nuclear free, even in peace time. The National Health Service uses X-ray units and radiation treatment throughout these non-nuclear zones; and all these boroughs are criss-crossed with subterranean plastic pipes that carry—along with the natural gas—radioactive trace elements to help the gas board locate leaks. Moreover, British Rail lines that cross the capital carry nuclear waste. The boroughs themselves pollute the environment with these notices.

12 TO CREATE MORE ROOF-GARDENS In high-rise cities, good-looking roofs are as important as handsome façades. New Yorkers know that, Romans, Athenians and hosts of other flat-dwelling Europeans have always known it; Londoners, unfortunately, do not. Look out of a 12th-floor window here, and you may feel compelled to jump: receding into the distance are row upon row of flat, grey roofs, all of them forlornly empty, or else crammed with tubes, pipes and ventilation shafts. Look out of a similar window in Manhattan, however, and there is a good chance you will see trees, patios and statues—even people enjoying themselves. We have puddle-stained roofing felt. They have roof-gardens.

Lush green eyries should spring up all over the city, creating worlds of interest for people looking down from above, softening harsh outlines and adding colour for those who glance up from the street.

But there is more to roof-gardens than just aesthetics. Though it is now a nightclub, the famous garden above what was once Derry & Toms is still fondly remembered, which suggests that such places are enduringly popular and likely to be well-used. Gardens above blocks of flats and offices could serve as semi-private parks for residents and employees, offering stunning panoramic views well away from traffic. The ecological benefits of roof-gardens are obvious too: while providing sanctuary for birds and insects, their trees and plants would also supplement, that great vegetable lung which helps the city to breathe.





The late 1960s London Bridge, above, should be rebuilt as it was in the 13th century with shops—similar to Florence's Pontevecchio, top

13 TO REBUILD LONDON BRIDGE
We need a proper London Bridge; not the present functional concrete structure, but one which reflects the glories of the past. English visitors to Florence may gaze admiringly at the Pontevecchio, unaware that London once possessed an equally fine bridge. The London Bridge exported to Arizona in 1968 was in fact only a replacement for a much

older bridge. The original bridge was completed in about 1209, a magnificent architectural achievement—20 feet wide and 900 feet long.

A variety of distinguished buildings were on the bridge, most notable of which was the exotic Nonesuch House, so called because there was no other building quite like it. As well as being London's only major river crossing until

1750, the bridge proved a popular tourist attraction. Of special interest to visitors was the gruesome collection of traitors' heads, mounted on spikes above one of the gates.

Sadly, the buildings became dilapidated and in 1758, just as the government was considering pulling them down, a mysterious fire did the work for them. The main structure was finally replaced in the early 19th century with a new bridge designed by John Rennie and his son while the present bridge, constructed between 1969 and 1972, is hardly inspiring.

The old bridge should be rebuilt on its former site, east of the new one, from old brick and stone. It could house antique shops, tobacconists, confectioners and other suitably quaint establishments, on the lines of Paultney Bridge in Bath. These would no doubt benefit from the influx of tourists that the bridge would attract, even if there were no impaled heads to draw the crowds.



14 TO IMPROVE STREET ENTERTAINMENT Buskers to be allowed to play anywhere, within reason, although they have to pass a busking test before they can perform. Those found playing who are not in possession of a busker's certificate issued by the London Institute of Licensed Buskers would have their equipment confiscated. Imaginative busking would be encouraged—mime artists, jugglers, fire-eaters, sword-swallowers—as would saxophonists and the old one-man band, but guitarists would have to sit a particularly hard test. Amplifiers and all forms of accompaniment from portable cassette players should be banned. The buskers would be seen at all major Underground railways stations (though not on the tubes themselves) and places like Soho, Leicester Square, Hays Galleria, Hyde Park and so on. They would also have to move about from time to time so passers-by did not have to listen to the same busker every day.



Spending a penny.

15 TO RESTORE VICTORIAN PUBLIC LAVATORIES Those impressive monuments to municipal life, the subterranean lavatories, whose iron railings once stood as landmarks at the centre island of so many wide carriageways, have all but disappeared.

Too often the expectations raised by their familiar signs are dashed by rusting ironwork and boarded-over entrances. The council's mocking sign, directing the pedestrian to the latest, French-designed, cream-coloured, musical cabins, is little comfort.

Of course, the activities of "cottaging" homosexuals, portrayed so graphically by the playwright Joe Orton, have done little to assist the reputation of traditional public lavatories. Nor is the risk of encountering crazed drug-takers an encouragement. But a full-time lavatory attendant, spending his day shining the yards of copper piping and pouring copious quantities of bleach over the Victorian ceramic-ware, will discourage them.

This is a measure that will have the backing of Gray's Inn, the Law Courts on the Strand, Simpsons of Piccadilly and all the other buildings, stores and hotels that the sensible Londoner, emulating Lord Birkenhead's regular visits to the National Liberal Club, currently uses in preference to modern conveniences.

16 TO CUT LUNCHTIME QUEUES IN BANKS AND IN POST OFFICES Market-oriented, supply-and-demand-conscious London should put up no longer with the ludicrous lines of frustrated customers who gather each lunchtime at their local banks and post offices.

For all the claims of the big banks that staff break times are staggered, it is obvious that too many counter staff are dispatched to take lunch at the very time when demand for their services is greatest.

An even worse offender is the Post Office, whose slovenly-dressed staff have been entrusted with far too many tasks to be able to offer an efficient service to the vast number of customers who want nothing more than stamps.

Banks and post offices should both be obliged to staff every counter as soon as a queue has formed; post offices should immediately create a stamps-only counter at every branch.

17 ALL CLOCKS TO TELL THE RIGHT TIME An owner of a clock displayed in public which consistently fails to show the right time shall be placed in the stocks and pelted with soft fruit by the passing citizenry.



Which of these clocks outside the Law Courts tells the right time?

18 THEATRES TO PRINT FULL REVIEWS It is an unfortunate feature of West End theatre productions that, however abysmal they are, managements can still produce snippets of praise from otherwise unfavourable reviews. The practice of transforming such phrases as "stupendously awful" into "stupendous" seems to have fallen off in recent years, but theatres still need to be made more accountable.

Jeffrey Archer's *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* attracted a fine spread of vitriolic copy. None of this ever appeared outside the theatre, of course. Instead, we were offered what must have been the only favourable words the play was given: "A triumph" (from a piece on audience reaction to the play in the *Daily Express*) and "A smash hit" (*The People*).

The recent Hinge and Bracket flop, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, boasted: "Totally hilarious" and "The audience went Wilde". The small print beneath gave the august sources for these comments as *Bath and West Evening Chronicle* and *The Lincolnshire Echo*.

This practice of selective self-advertisement is misleading. *Les Misérables* and *Lettice and Lovage* both print full reviews outside the theatre, but this is because they were well received critically. Other productions, however much they are panned by the critics, should follow suit, and be forced to print large-scale reviews from major newspapers outside the theatre.



19 TO ABOLISH THE ITALIAN PEPPER GRINDER This large implement, sometimes measuring up to 2 feet in height, is a feature of Italian restaurants. Our objections to it are on two grounds. The first is that the grinder is used with abandon by Italian waiters who cover any dish with pepper before the diner has time to prevent it. Use of the grinder is a reflex action and it is not unknown for ice-cream to be topped with a sprinkling of pepper.

The second objection is that the grinder, with its obvious phallic shape, is used by Italian waiters to establish their manhood in the presence of female diners. The waiter and his pepper grinder always seem to arrive at the crucial moment in conversation. Countless jokes, anecdotes and proposals have been interrupted by the grinder.

20 TO PENALIZE RESTAURANTS SOLICITING DOUBLE TIPS Many restaurateurs continue to abuse their customers with what amounts to credit-card fraud. The scam works in the following way: a bill is presented. The diner produces a credit card and adds it to the proffered plate. The waiter returns with the bill total

entered on a credit-card form's top line, leaving the line marked tips and the box for the total blank. When he resubmits the original bill, which already includes a service charge for 10 or perhaps 15 per cent, with the misleading credit-card form, and hovers, the customer may well feel intimidated into adding an unnecessary extra tip in the blank box. The restaurant is guilty of sharp practice.

If, as is increasingly common, the waiter returns with the credit-card total blank and without the original restaurant bill on the plate, the deception is more serious.

As a remedy we suggest that customers take assertiveness training until they can complain loudly at the former practice; and, in the latter instance, for a London-wide by-law to excuse customers from any payment for their meal at all. Caveat restaurateur!

21 TO MAKE RESTAURANTS DISPOSE OF THEIR OWN RUBBISH PROMPTLY One of the principal causes of London's appalling tatty appearance are the piles of black plastic bags, bottles and takeaway food cartons that litter the pavements every night and morning. At present restaurateurs are charged on a sliding scale for the disposal of their rubbish—stacked immediately outside the door.

Every other major city in Europe manages to cope with this problem—when was the last time you saw a massive pile of black bags in the Boulevard Saint Germain? But Westminster City Council, along with other central London boroughs, seems incapable of enforcing a system that makes the restaurant responsible for its own refuse.

The owners of fast-food outlets, who have sold their customers the offending packages along with their product, argue—with some justification—that it is the loutish behaviour of their clientele which leads to the litter near their shop. Some of the chains insist on litter patrols over a specified area as a condition of their granting a franchise, but clearly these do nothing to stop the mess.

Our ideal is that by the time shops open for business in the morning all the detritus of the previous night must have been cleared away. We also believe that the rubbish should not be stacked in view of the public during the evening. The operation of clearing must therefore be conducted in the early hours of the morning. There would be stiff fines and the possibility of a suspended drinking licence for any infraction.



Unsightly rubbish dumped by restaurant staff



The gaudy neon signs of Piccadilly Circus

22 TO REBUILD PICCADILLY CIRCUS Piccadilly Circus must be completely rebuilt according to John Nash's original design. Only the old County Fire Office and the graceful curve of his proud Regent Street Quadrant remain. Sadly, the tawdry souvenir stalls, the vast neon advertisements and the incessant roar of roadworks and traffic prove more distracting.

Piccadilly enjoyed a brief period of refinement after its construction in 1819. But within 30 years its decline had begun with the destruction of Nash's arcade in 1848. In 1886 the encroachment of Shaftesbury Avenue ruined the symmetry of the circus. Since then it has continued to suffer at the hands of rapacious, insensitive property developers and parsimonious town councils. Vandalism has invariably prevailed over aestheticism. Norman Shaw's brave plans for a sympathetic reconstruction of Piccadilly Circus in the 20th century were never realized. But Jack Cotton's "monster of Piccadilly" was very nearly built. His plan for a 172 foot office block with an enormous helicopter-shaped crane on top was cancelled only because of the outcry caused when it was announced to the Press.

Defenders of Piccadilly Circus may talk approvingly of its charming vulgarity, but such excuses hamper serious plans for reconstruction. Inevitably there will be a few sad casualties, such as the refurbished Criterion Restaurant and, of course, Eros. But both could be accommodated when the new building programme was completed. Once more Piccadilly Circus could become a place of elegant walkways, its lower windows separated decorously by Ionic pilasters. And the Nash arcades could be returned to Regent Street, designed as before so that men cannot urinate against the columns without being seen.

This worthy venture could be achieved without offending enthusiasts of the present Circus, and without recourse to public funds. The current buildings, complete with advertising hoardings, could perhaps be sold for a large sum of money to a Japanese investment bank and rebuilt as a splendid tourist attraction/work of art in Tokyo.

23 TO IMPROVE LONDON TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

The Post Office has been urging us all to use postal codes for many years now. Their exhortation has had little effect on the nation's biggest publisher of addresses, British Telecom. The Post Office informed us that it confidently expected postal codes to be added for the first time to a volume of the London directory during the course of 1988.

But we have news for them. British Telecom revealed through a press spokesman that there are no plans to publish postal codes until 1989. We would recommend many other reforms, such as the printing of an A-Z London street directory in every volume to assist lost Londoners at telephone kiosks, but such common sense is clearly beyond the ken of this privatized bureaucracy. Given the increasing rarity of telephone directories in public telephone kiosks, we therefore suggest that senior management be redeployed restocking kiosks with the present imperfect volumes.

24 TO HOLD A PIGEON SHOOT IN ST JAMES'S PARK

This would be a concerted attempt to control the ever-burgeoning pigeon population and to provide lunching civil servants with an outlet for their frustrations. We would institute a drive of St James's Park on a monthly basis, beaters would be supplied—as part of their community training—from among convicted graffitiists.



pigeon shoot.

25 BUSES TO BE NAMED

Following the example of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, London buses should be given names instead of numbers—names somehow appropriate to their routes or their frequency. Thus the 22 which "runs" along the King's Road could aptly be christened *Godot*—you wait for it. *Musketeer* would be suitable for any bus with a tendency to appear three-at-a-time, while for the 14 and the 30 Ivy and *The Duncan Goodhew* would be appropriate names—frequently caught in the Knightsbridge traffic, one is always creeping along, the other always crawling. Among buses whose names reflect their routes, *Nelson* could run through Trafalgar Square, *The Buckingham Bronco* past the Palace, and *Temperance* and *Temptation* in opposite directions along Shaftesbury Avenue, hard by the fleshpots of Soho.

Names are less easily confused than numbers, so this system has at least one practical advantage, but on the whole its benefits are psychological. How much more worthwhile it would seem to spend 20 minutes waiting for *Forgiveness* or for *Just Deserts* than for the dreary old 74, and how much more stimulating, too, would be the bus-stop conversation. A



well-named bus could raise the spirits of all who saw it. Imagine how Dr Runcie, gazing from a window at Lambeth Palace, would welcome the sight of *Divine Inspiration* making its way towards him through the fume-filled streets.

26 A BRIDLE PATH FROM WEST TO EAST LONDON AND BACK The horse is often as quick in London as any vehicle. We urge the creation of a bridle path that would start on Ealing Common and link the main parks of Central London, ending in Smithfield Market. Along the path there would be strategically-placed stable blocks where the commuter in search of exercise and entertainment would hire a horse which he or she would deposit at the end of the journey.

This equestrian alternative would be run by London Regional Transport, who would ensure that the horses were drawn from a bloodline of sturdy and docile hunters, and were well cared for. It would encourage a greater awareness of the beauties of the London parks, and would act as a valuable source of relaxation for commuters who spend far too many hours trapped behind the wheel of their car or hanging from the strap of a crowded bus or tube.

27 THE ALBERT EMBANKMENT One of the views of London is the south bank of the Thames from the Tate Gallery. Once the site of the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, the Albert Embankment is now the home of a grim row of bleak office blocks which look as if they would adorn Leningrad. They include the headquarters of the London Fire Brigade, the new Law of the Sea Conference building, Tintagel House (home of the Special Branch) and the glass-walled apartment inhabited by Jeffrey Archer.

You emerge from the Tate Gallery, having seen some of the finest English landscapes, to be confronted with one of the disasters of post-war architecture.

The entire south embankment from Lambeth Bridge to Vauxhall Bridge should be razed to the ground and rebuilt to a scale more becoming to London and its history. We should provide future generations with a panorama as grand in its conception as Nash's work in Regent's Park. There are many other sites in London which would benefit from this approach, but this one is a priority.

We are not calling for an exact replica of Nash's work, but rather for a re-creation of the

spirit that he embodied and which is now all but lost to British town-planning. We envisage removing the Albert Embankment road away from the river, and placing it alongside the railway line that runs to Waterloo.

The way would then be open to create a spectacular river walk, the backdrop to which would be a number of sensibly proportioned buildings clad in Bath stone. Their actual design would be the subject of a public competition. But we believe that this should not be open to futurists, such as Richard Rogers.

On the north bank of the Thames, which is only marginally more pleasing, we would create a number of cafés from which to appreciate this new view.

28 RETURN OF TEMPLE BAR The Temple Bar, which was rebuilt by Christopher Wren in the early 1670s, should be returned to a site near where it originally stood to mark the western limits of the City. It was removed from Fleet Street/Strand because of traffic congestion in 1878. Later it was re-erected at Theobalds Park, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire where it now stands dilapidated and unappreciated.

29 CHARMING WARDENS Obviously traffic wardens are necessary in this increasingly congested city. And no one would envy them their job. What we want for them is a uniform which emphasizes such natural charms as they are blessed

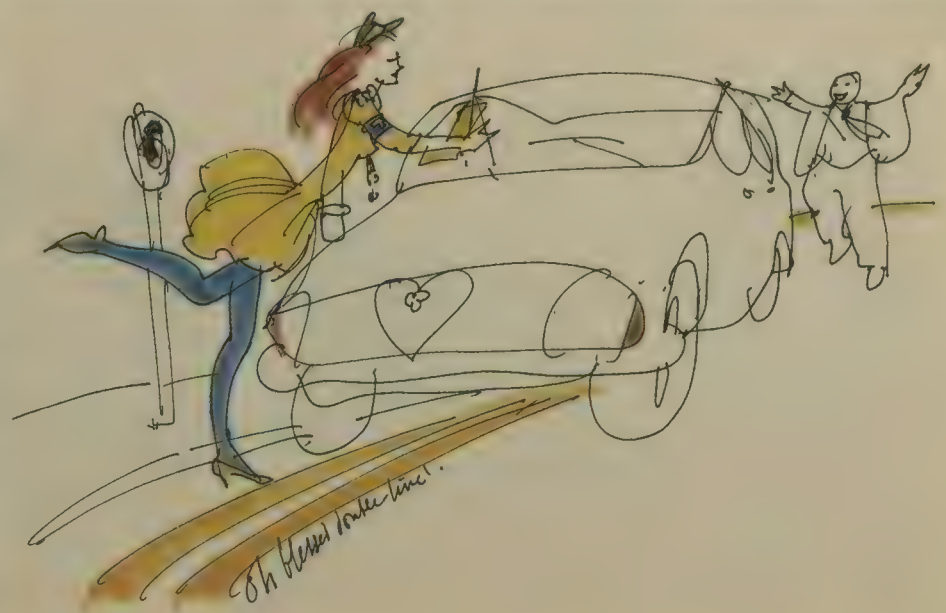
with and adds to the gaiety of the streets. The Parisian warden—in sky-blue stewardess style—goes some way towards our ideal.

While on the matter of traffic control, we would send all members of the clamp squad—and their counterparts in the police car pound—to a school for charm and diplomacy.

30 TO ABOLISH PAY-AS-YOU-ENTER BUSES. The routemaster two-man operated bus is gradually being phased out of service. London Transport claims that as much as £250,000 a year can be saved on a major route if a routemaster is replaced by a one-man-operated bus. It also states that the new buses are four times safer because they prevent passengers from entering and exiting recklessly. One problem still has to be solved: boarding times on the new buses are almost twice as slow as on the routemaster (3.8 seconds as compared with 2.2 seconds).

Buses in Bexley Heath are currently undergoing trials with new autocheck machines which electronically stamp tickets and speed up the boarding process. But there are several good reasons for maintaining the routemaster, uneconomical though it may be. They are well designed with their distinctive wooden platform at the back which makes it easy to get on and off. The conductor is able to provide change, something that the new buses seem unable to do. The routemaster's classic design has long been a feature of the London streets. The actress Colette Hiller is currently fighting a battle to save the London bus; she needs full public support before the routemaster disappears altogether.

31 THE IMPROVEMENT OF REGENT'S PARK ZOO TEAROOMS There is evidence to suggest that Regent's Park Zoo authorities prefer to feed their orang-utans, stick insects and Nile rats better than they do the human visitors to the zoo. Certainly the food and service given to the average gibbon compares favourably to those on offer in the tearooms. Situated roughly between the parrot house and the vultures, the tearooms are modelled on the lines of a motorway service station. There is a very limited choice for visitors, who are required to serve themselves. The authorities appear to wish that their customers ape the



exhibits by eating with their hands: chips are served in paper envelopes and not on plates.

We urge that the Zoo tearooms are repositioned alongside one of the better enclosures. It might be possible to arrange the restaurant so that it shared two, or even three, walls with animal enclosures. Self-service and envelopes of chips would be banned as likely to put the exhibits off their food.

32 RESTORE SALUTING All members of London Transport, British Telecom, the Gas Board, British Rail, the AA and RAC shall salute when addressed by or addressing a member of the public.



Statues for an time

33 TO ERECT STATUES OF CONTEMPORARY HEROES Why should the most recent London statues commemorate the deeds of almost half a century ago? And why are they invariably inspired by military success?

Many more contemporary figures should be honoured by a statue in central London. They would be drawn from all walks of British life and would not represent only the deceased.

Surely Lord Olivier warrants a bronze on the podium of the National Theatre. Richard Dimbleby could well stand at Langham Place. Henry Moore might stand outside the Tate. Graham Greene could slouch in Doughty Street, Evelyn Waugh would be seen seated outside White's Club. Dame Edith Evans, perhaps in a group with Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson, might adorn Shaftesbury Avenue.

These statues, far from being a drain on the public purse, would be paid for by the constructors of any new office buildings in London. A condition of planning permission would be the cost of a statue within a mile of their site.

There is no reason why there should not also be more temporary statues of contemporary figures in London. A podium in Trafalgar Square could, for example, be graced with the presence of Lester Piggott or Mike Gatting and the Pakistani umpire Shakoor Rana.

34 TO INTRODUCE SANITY TESTS FOR ALL MOTOR-CYCLE MESSENGERS London is a frustrating place to drive in. As it becomes more congested so its drivers become more impatient. Some groups of drivers, however, are given to a mad and dangerous impetuosity that is in no way justified by the traffic problem. Chief among these are the motorcycle messengers who weave and dodge through the traffic jams, wearing a wild expression of the palpably certifiable. We urge that all motor-

cycle messengers are given strict medical examinations annually to detect signs of a mental unreliability.

The drivers of Post Office vans and of evening-newspaper vans should undergo similar testing. The drivers of Volvo estates, who are popularly deemed to be among the most selfish in London, should be given an especially hard driving examination each year.

35 BRING YOUR OWN WINE IN RESTAURANTS A "bring your own bottle" system should be adopted in London's restaurants. It is widespread in Australia and New Zealand; only a handful practise it in London. The restaurant owner is not licensed to provide alcohol, but customers may bring it. A "BYO" sign would indicate this in the window, and £1 a bottle would be charged. A prerequisite is an off-licence located near by. This is not recommended for top West End restaurants where expense-account dining predominates, but for more modest local establishments, to enable Londoners to avoid the substantial mark-ups which make eating out so expensive.

36 COURTESY CAMPAIGN We recommend that anyone who is consistently offensive during the course of serving the public shall be placed in the stocks and be pelted with soft fruit by the passing citizenry. In our estimation the doorman at Joe Allen's restaurant in Covent Garden is the first appropriate candidate for such treatment.

37 COMMUTING ON THE THAMES The Thames, London's parent and once its greatest highway, has become a wasted asset. We curse it for getting in the way instead of making use of it. What we should be doing is travelling on it, and thus both enjoying some of the most spectacular of the city's sights and avoiding the congestion along those appalling roads that run through Chiswick and Chelsea to the City on the north bank and through Battersea to Bermondsey and beyond on the south.

This is an appeal, then, for the restoration of regular water buses and water taxis. It is more than 100 years since a cry of "Oars" would



Commuters could take to the water buses

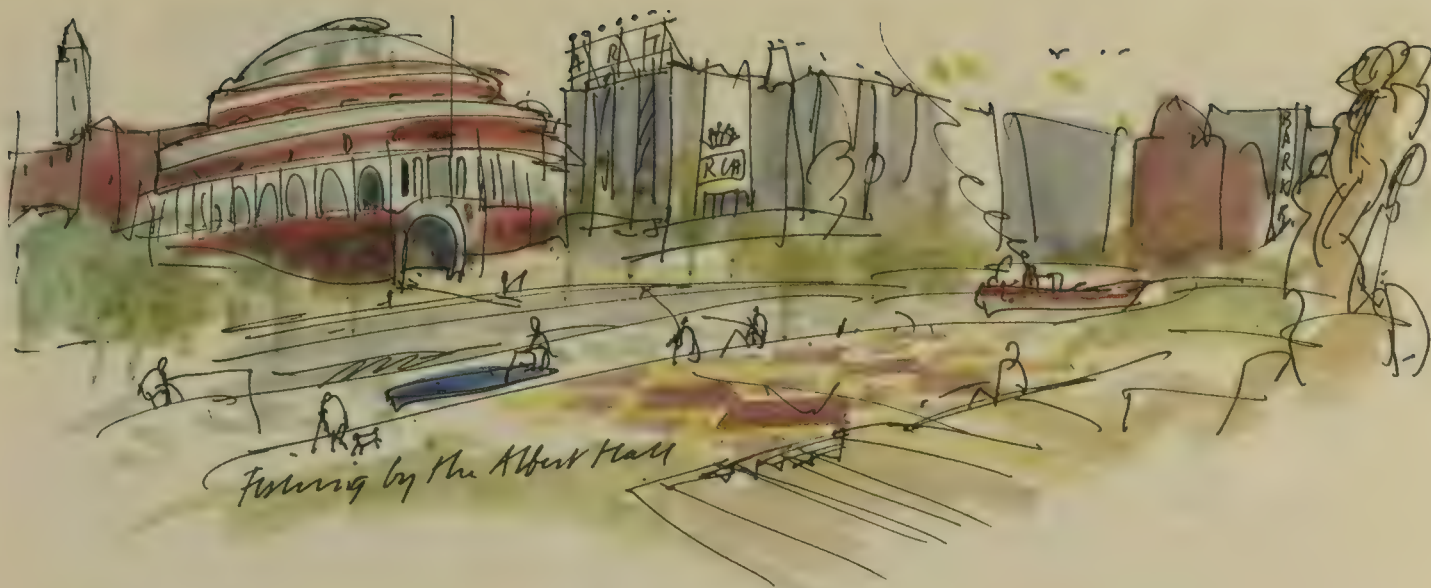
summon a waterman to transport you along the river (and more than 200 since the same cry confused a visiting Frenchman into thinking that he was being invited to a brothel), and it was then the cheapest form of travel. The reasons given today for the lack of transport on the Thames are cost and speed limit. The last attempt to overcome these obstacles, a hydrofoil service, failed in the 1970s because it proved to be uneconomical.

It is clearly up to the people of London, or at least those who live on or near the waterside and whose business is equally close to the river, to support this attractive and healthy form of commuting. It must be more reliable and relaxing than the erratic progress of those cumbersome road buses, and certainly less mentally degrading than the tube, so can we not have another attempt? Thames Line and *The Daily Telegraph* think we can.

The company is to launch a regular water-bus service on the Thames this summer, and meanwhile is already operating a 51-passenger catamaran between Charing Cross and the Isle of Dogs, five days a week, exclusively for the *Telegraph*, whose staff have recently been moved out of Fleet Street and were apparently under the impression that their new offices were entirely surrounded by water. When the service opens to the public it will run at 15-minute intervals between Chelsea Harbour and Greenwich. There will be a fleet of six water-jet-powered aluminium catamarans each capable of travelling in excess of 25mph and covering the journey from Charing Cross to the West India Dock Pier in 15-20 minutes. The fares are expected to be about the same as London Regional Transport.



The 'Ayr-werk' must get through



38 TO RESTORE THE LOST RIVERS OF LONDON It is easy to see why London's rivers were lost. During the 18th and early 19th centuries they became little more than open sewers. *Punch* magazine said of the Fleet, which ran along the course of Farringdon Road, that it gave off "odours that speak aloud and stalk over the face of the so-called waters". Londoners were thus relieved when the streams and rivers were incorporated in the vast underground labyrinth of the sewer system.

We want some, if not all, of these rivers to be restored and to be thereafter maintained by Thames Water. We would start with the Walbrook that rises in Shoreditch and now runs through pipes between Ludgate Hill and Cornhill. The Westbourne, which once flowed under Knightsbridge before it was dammed in the 18th century to create the Serpentine, should also be immediately reinstated. These would be followed by the Fleet, which pours unnoticed into the Thames from a pipe near Blackfriars Bridge, and the Tyburn, which trickles ignominiously in a conduit above Sloane Square Underground station.

The cost of restoring entire rivers would sometimes be prohibitive but there seems to be no reason why considerable stretches of lost rivers should not be disinterred and landscaped.

39 THE RENAMING AND REVITALIZATION OF NETWORK SOUTH-EAST Anyone who has to suffer the indignity and frustration of commuting into London on the creaking Network South-East does not need to be told that it demands a complete overhaul in its service and appearance.

Network South-East has lately undergone what is merely a cosmetic improvement, and its blue and white livery is meant to express the notion of speed and promptness. That promise is seldom fulfilled.

We recommend that Network South-East reverts to a name which is simple and descriptive, the South-Eastern Railway. Carriages should be repainted a sober dark green or a maroon lined in gold, unlike the present rolling stock which resembles nothing so much as second-hand ice-cream vans that have been conceived by unimaginative marketing men hired by British Rail.

40 REDESIGN STREET FURNITURE London's appearance is marred by the unco-ordinated design of what is bureaucratically described as street furniture. Litter bins, salt dispensers, road signs, lamp-posts and bus shelters clutter the streets haphazardly.

We believe that the capital could look immeasurably more attractive if it adopted a unified approach to the design and materials of all this necessary but ugly paraphernalia.

A competition should be held to offer up this considerable contract to the nation's designers. It would stipulate the use of natural and traditional materials—wood, stone and wrought iron, for example—which would endure long into the future.

What could be more elegant or uplifting than a wrought-iron bus shelter or a granite salt dispenser?

41 AN ANNUAL WINTER FESTIVAL IN LONDON In the 18th century, when winters were far harder, London cheered itself up with a magnificent fair that was held on a frozen Thames.

Though the Thames no longer freezes over we see no reason why London should not have a Winter Festival to dispel the gloom of February. We are not a Catholic country, but we could surely make more of the week pre-

ceding Lent. People may argue that this would be artificial and thus unsuccessful, but in Venice there has been a spectacular revival of the traditional *Carnevale* in recent years.

One of the days of the Festival would be a public holiday, perhaps Shrove Tuesday, on which there would be held a number of processions (contributions from the boroughs of London) to celebrate the glories of winter and to raise the spirits of Londoners. We would also institute a waterborne procession, which would begin at Richmond and end at the Tower.

Alternatively, the Festival could be based around the patron saint of the City, St Paul, whose day (January 24) we discover goes unmarked by the City of London and its Corporation. They may undergo a conversion.

42 TO EXTEND THE OPENING HOURS OF ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS Galleries could be made more accessible to Londoners if they stayed open beyond weekday working hours. As well as making a pleasant meeting point—a cultural alternative to the pub—they would provide a restful place to wander after work. The Tate Gallery's late-night opening during its Pre-Raphaelite exhibition proved unsuccessful because the gallery's Millbank site is so remote. But better-situated museums and galleries like the National and the National Portrait could



Frost fair on the Thames in 1814. London should have a comparable Winter Festival today

surely attract visitors easily. The National Gallery plans to stay open until 8pm on Wednesdays this year in July, August and September, and is staging musical recitals, talks and lectures to encourage visitors.

The Tate hopes to do the same with its late Picasso exhibition between June and September. Other institutions like the Victoria & Albert and the Royal Academy hire themselves out for private receptions in the evening.

Although galleries and museums approve in principle of late-night opening, they point to the prohibitive cost of keeping on staff, even for just one night a week. The British Museum alone employs between 300 and 400 warders. It is especially difficult for museums that do not charge an entrance fee; increased attendance does not necessarily mean increased revenue. The other related problem is that many museums cannot afford to promote themselves; the Theatre Museum is one sad example of this. Opened in April, 1987 in Russell Street, Covent Garden, it has yet to gain the interest it deserves. Ironically, it is one of the few museums which regularly stays open until 8pm. Even an institution so august as the British Museum needs a special development trust to find new ways of funding special exhibitions and of promoting its work.

A change of public attitude is required, in order to insist that these cultural pleasures are not confined between the hours of 10am and 6pm. Sponsorship for late-night opening should be encouraged and museums supported when they offer the opportunities for late-night viewing. Central museums and galleries could open on different nights during the week so that an evening cultural visit is always possible.

43 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LONDON CAB DRIVER It is difficult to know where to start with the London cabbie. His character, a combination of truculence, humour, pessimism and venality, is probably so fixed that no amount of legislation or sound suggestion is capable of producing a marked improvement in his dealings with the public.

However, we dare to urge certain changes. The first is that a cab driver travelling with his sign illuminated must, when hailed, take the passenger to the destination he requires. Too often the cab driver labours under the misapprehension that a passenger is being unreasonable in wanting to go west when the cab driver wants to go east. And too often he refuses a fare if it does not happen to take him where he plans to have lunch.

It may be possible to introduce a colour-code system to avoid heated exchanges on the

pavement. A cab driver going east for instance would switch on a red light, while one going west would use a green light. Obviously this could be extended to take in cabbies living in the north and south of London. Those on their way to lunch must switch off their "For Hire" light.

We also believe that cab drivers wishing to ban smokers should advertise this fact on the outside of the cab and not seek to hide this restriction until the passenger has boarded. The meter should be improved so that it may be viewed from the nearside window as well as from the inside of the cab. This would eliminate the misunderstandings that occasionally occur between foreigners and the cab drivers as to the amount they owe.

Finally, we hope that more cab drivers introduce telephones to their taxis.

44 RETRACTABLE DOMES FOR SPORTING ARENAS Why is London, a city of sophistication and much brilliant technology, so slow to protect itself against its certain, if unpredictable, rainfall? Those who have sat through a wet Saturday at Lord's—and the headquarters of cricket seems to have its Test Matches more consistently interrupted than any other ground in the world—will have experienced the very summit of frustration and indecision. Should they stay, in the hope that there might be play after lunch, or after tea? Or should they go and do something more productive, and in effect tear up tickets which now cost anything up to £30 each (refunds available only if no play whatever takes place)?

The ultimate peak of discontent was reached during the damp Saturday of the centenary Test Match against Australia at Lord's in August, 1980, when even the normally inert members in the pavilion so lost their cool that they attacked the umpires, apparently in the belief that they held powers over the weather normally attributable to even higher authority.

The same might well have happened at Wimbledon last summer, had the umpires not wisely stayed off their chairs, when rain ruined much of the first week's tennis programme. Snow and frost could wreak similar havoc with internationals at Twickenham and Wembley this, or any other, winter.

It is time we built retractable domes to protect London's major sporting arenas. They exist in other parts of the world. Houston has had one for years, Toronto is currently building one for its exciting Blue Jays baseball team. Certainty of play would persuade many sports enthusiasts to abandon their television sets.



Underwood's logo calculated to offend?

45 TO IMPROVE LONDON'S SHOPFRONTS The fine architecture in London's high streets is often marred by garish shopfronts. Although there are stringent controls on listed buildings and in conservation areas, elsewhere tasteless shop signs are allowed to multiply. Hamburger chains are often singled out for their vulgarity, but even these cannot surpass the horrors of Underwood's chemists. Their lurid green logo seems calculated to give offence, and continues to be illuminated long after the shops have closed.

Clearly in designated high-street shopping areas, there is no room for subtle frontages, or rows of bijou shops out of a Dickens film set. But councils should be given greater powers to prevent the spread of tacky frontages. In Chester the council refused to allow the orange Job Centre logo to disfigure one of its streets, and a more restrained sign was eventually produced. Their decision sets an excellent precedent for London councils.



46 BRIGHTEN UP BUCKINGHAM PALACE One of the tragedies of tourist London is the complete absence of anything much to look at through the railings of Buckingham Palace. True, the changing of the guard occasionally animates the featureless Victorian frontage, but there is little else to cheer the foreign multitudes. There are a number of options for improving the Palace as a tourist attraction, but the best—if, perhaps, the least serious—seems to be the construction of something like a giant cuckoo clock on the balcony from which life-size models of the royal family would parade on the hour.

47 NEW USE FOR COUNTY HALL Something called the London Residuary Board has a duty to dispose of all former Greater London Council property, which includes, of course, the South Bank's most famous monument—County Hall. The present occupiers, the Inner London Education Authority, are fighting their notice to quit. It is almost certain that they will lose the struggle, however, in the face of the





The County Hall Show.

Government's overwhelming desire to banish the memory of the GLC.

Sadly it is likely that the building will be converted into a mixture of a hotel, office block and residential apartments. There is already quite enough hotel and office space in London, and there are signs that the hotels have already outpriced themselves compared to other European capitals.

Let us have the vision which would complete the artistic theme of the South Bank of the Thames, which begins at the National Theatre, by devoting the whole County Hall building to a new National Museum which would exhibit the considerable works of art hidden away in the vaults and warehouses of the Tate Gallery, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the British Museum and the National Gallery.

The works of art and antiquities deposited so secretly by these institutions are part of Britain's heritage, and in the majority of cases were given to the public for their enjoyment. What better place for their enjoyment than County Hall?

48 CLIMBERS ON EYESORES London is not noted for its modern architecture, particularly along the Thames where brutalist buildings spoil the river. We suggest, therefore, that Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus*) is planted at the foot of the river frontage of the Hayward Gallery and of the nearby National Theatre, notably the concrete sugar lump of unrelieved ugliness to its west. Virginia creeper would clothe the walls for most of the year, and its spectacular flame-tinted leaves in autumn would provide a splash of colour to this otherwise dismal patch of the South Bank.

Similarly, a variegated form of common ivy (*Hedera helix*) could run rampant over the concrete Barbican Centre, trailing up the balconies of the flats, and thus enhancing the view from the waterside terrace by the lake and the church inside the complex.



HULTON PICTURE LIBRARY

49 TO BRING BACK TRAMS Not the old, clanking varieties (above, c 1900), which finally expired in London shortly after the war, but the modern, comfortable, quiet and speedy version to be seen in some capital cities. Modern trams are economical to run, they do not pollute the atmosphere, their direction is sure and their timing is better than buses. Car and taxi drivers hate them because there is no doubt about who has priority; everyone else should welcome their return for the same reason, and because public travelling is likely to become faster and easier.

Because London's street plans are so erratic we believe that their return should be limited to four crosstown arteries. One route would run from Tottenham via Stoke Newington, Shoreditch, London Bridge, round the Oval to Clapham. The second would start from Shepherd's Bush and proceed via Oxford Street, to the City and East India Docks. The third would run from Camden Town via Tottenham Court Road, Whitehall, Millbank, across Vauxhall Bridge to Wandsworth. The fourth would run from Tufnell Park via King's Cross and Blackfriars Bridge to Lewisham.

The trams will normally run on two-way lines down the middle of the roads, will have priority over all except emergency traffic, should have one standard fare and run at intervals of not more than six minutes.

50 LONDON'S DRESS SENSE In the 18th century London was renowned for its finery, and even in the Regency period we were famous for our beaux. Today, we are only slightly better dressed than the good people of Murmansk.

The British seem to have lost all their sense of style and elegance. Ever since the days of the demob suit, there has been a decline in the standards Londoners apply to their dress. Some of the blame for this must lie with our sports culture. Trainers, T-shirts, track suits and skiing anoraks are worn to express fitness and health. Unfortunately those who do wear them rarely exemplify these qualities.

We would not go so far as to ban the shoes that look like Cornish pasties, or the anoraks that do not quite cover the jacket worn underneath, or the sagging sack of a suit favoured by so many office workers (although it would be very tempting).

Before adopting all the 49 steps we have suggested, we should perhaps address this issue first. If Londoners are to recapture their pride and their sense of identity, they should begin with the way they decorate the city they should be proud of. That means that they should dress with care and pride, as a Parisian or a Milanese does as second nature.

Londoners are not inherently less good looking than, say the French or the Italians, they simply lack the courage to make the best of themselves and therefore their city.

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TRAVEL IN COMFORT

DON'T FEEL THE PINCH

TOM WOLFE AND HIS

Gilbert Adair interviews Tom Wolfe, the dandy of American literature who has produced a great novel of our time

LIKE THAT of London, New York's literary constellation can claim both stars and comets. The former shed a bright, even, unchanging lustre from one decade to the next, one fashion to the next; the latter, by contrast, tend to light up the sky in an incandescent, one-off flash before ignominiously fizzling out.

For nearly a quarter of a century Tom Wolfe has remained, it is safe to say, one of its most brilliant stars, one of the very few literary figures in any city of the world who are actually recognized and accorded in the street. Yet, when he gatecrashed the cultural scene in the early 1960s, bringing with him from his native Virginia a graduate degree from Yale, a few years' experience as a provincial reporter, a Southern gentleman's taste and a feverish desire to be noticed at any cost, he must have appeared to the then somewhat stuffy establishment as, potentially, the fastest-burning comet it was ever likely to encounter.

But though his success was of the overnight variety, that night was long in coming. Hired by the New York *Herald Tribune* in 1962, he dutifully slogged away, writing on sports (whence derived his cheery, pugnacious style) and general assignments, and waiting none too patiently for the big break.

The break happened with an article for *Esquire*, whose title, *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*, was also to become that of his first published book. Commissioned ostensibly to cover something called a Hot Rod and Custom Car Show in California, Wolfe not only turned the piece into a pioneering essay on how the 60s were about to transform the whole American class system, but evolved what was perhaps the most distinctive non-fiction style in contemporary literature. It was an endlessly imitated style that dragged the English language screaming and kicking into the era of heavy rock, video games and the McLuhanite buzz of radio and TV. His work gradually began to push documentary reporting so close to the frontiers of fiction that his most successful book, *The Right Stuff*, would lend itself without undue strain to a film adaptation.

That same street-smart prose, the literary equivalent of juvenile delinquency, made him a number of enemies on his rise to the summit—notably the Leonard Bernsteins, whose well-intentioned but ill-judged Black Panther reception he devastatingly debunked in *Radical Chic*, still the most famous and infamous of his essays.

Now a pillar of that establishment, happily married and a father of two, Wolfe has finally put his talent where his mouth is and, at the age of 57, produced his first, mammoth work of pure fiction, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, to be published here this month by Jonathan Cape.

Tom Wolfe, right, New York's literary star

CONSERVATIVE CHIC



But surely, I propose, there currently exists a whole clique of much-hyped young writers, the so-called Brat Pack, purveyors of urban angst, who cover more or less the same territory?

"I intended it to be a one-shot proposition, a detour, in the way a novelist may write a travel book. I hoped to prove to myself—and, I guess,

"It's a very common phenomenon these days . . . and, God knows, journalists do it all the time. One track in your mind is saying: 'I've done the right thing'. And the other . . . well, the other starts to wonder. . . . For example, journalists are always talking about the people's 'right to know'; and, as a journalist, I

remember always justifying stories that I'd written, particularly when I'd exposed details of somebody's life, by saying: 'Well, sure, this embarrasses the person but, after all, there's a Higher Truth that I've served, which is the people's right to know.' And if it advances my career at the same time, so much the better. I think that's how New York functions these days, and that's why I wanted to keep the city in the foreground. There is a constant pressure in New York, especially in the 80s with all this mad money fever about, that tends to make people push the personal ambition in their double-track tape that much more intensely than they would do otherwise or anywhere else.

"There is in the novel, for example, the lawyer Larry Kramer, who has chosen a low-paying public service job for idealistic reasons—he wants to be close to the people most in need, he sees himself thrusting his bare hands into the community. But, suddenly, wham! he finds himself in the 1980s and everyone is making so much money . . . everyone is living so well, his old classmates, people who are no older than himself. So he realizes that he is going to have to become someone very prominent very quickly. And the way to do that is to catch a big fish in the net, someone like Sherman McCoy."

Wolfe is fascinated by what he perceives to be the staggering prosperity of the United States—a measure of prosperity which he believes has not yet been fully comprehended.

"So many Americans now own pieces of real estate . . . and *large objects*," he adds, with almost a hiss of envy in his voice, "cars and trailers and yachts. In New York City, for example, there are practically no blue-collar residential areas left—the Irish have moved out, the Italians have moved out and the Jews are moving out now. They've all moved to the suburbs and bought houses. The Irish cop in New York now goes home to a place like Westchester or Long Island. There really is no longer anything you could call a working class in this country. As soon as any person is working, working steadily, even if he is just a mechanic or a carpenter or a cable-vision linesman, it would be absurd to consider him working class, because he probably owns his own home and vacations in resorts in Hawaii and Puerto Rico."

As the oracle of contemporary American culture, both counter- and mainstream, through which he has sashayed like some "Huck Finn drawn by Aubrey Beardsley", as Elaine Dundy, a former girlfriend, once wrote of him, he has always directed his affectionately predatory scrutiny on those figures who best represent the particular time and place he is describing. So, in the 60s, in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* and *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*, he wrote about specifically, now mythically, 60s prototypes, rock stars, dropouts, Ken Kesey and the Pranksters; in the 70s, about astronauts and art dealers; and now, in the 80s, here he is writing, all too topically, about an investment manipulator (and even the accident that brings about McCoy's come-uppance had to be altered because, originally, it bore too close a resemblance to the Bernhard Goetz subway shooting affair)

"I guess," sighs Wolfe, with the sort of creased grin that is usually referred to as rueful, "I was pretty lucky that the book came out just

when the Wall Street Crash occurred, which made the whole nation focus on these . . . yuppie brokers." (Wolfe conveys his distaste for "the dread word yuppie", perhaps because it is not one of his own inventions.) "But I'd been hearing stories about the wild times on the stock market since the early 80s, so at the last minute I decided I would make McCoy a bond salesman or trader. My original idea was that he be a writer, which would be easy because it would be much closer to home. But the problem was that he should live on Park Avenue, which wasn't too plausible. Louis Auchincloss apart, I don't know of a single writer who lives there. He had to be very rich—and for the really, really rich it has to be an apartment in a building erected between 1905 and 1934, exclusively on Fifth Avenue and Park Avenue. That's the real game. Nothing else counts. Besides, the book turns on a scandal and writers aren't that badly hurt by scandals."

Curiously enough, the patrician McCoy becomes an increasingly sympathetic character as he is ever more inextricably entangled in the intestinal whorls of the American justice system, as though he himself were personifying the aphorism quoted in the novel that "a liberal is a conservative who has been arrested". His wife leaves him, his firm lays him off, his Park Avenue neighbours cut him, his neighbours' children cut his six-year-old daughter.

Though McCoy is a hit-and-run driver, though he is unfaithful to his wife (it is his mistress's presence beside him in the Mercedes that compounds his reluctance to report the incident at once), though, too, as one of Wall Street's "Masters of the Universe", he commits the quintessentially yuppie sin of pride, Wolfe vehemently denies engineering his hero's downfall to serve as a moral cautionary tale.

"Actually, what concerned me more was showing up the criminal justice system as it functions today and demonstrating the awful, ironic truth of the proposition that McCoy's so-called advantages, his money, his position, turn into terrible disadvantages once the machinery of federal justice cranks into motion." Can that really be true?

"Oh, absolutely! A marvellous case in point was that of the former United States Secretary of Labor Raymond Donovan, who was indicted, in the very Bronx courthouse that I write about in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, on charges of racketeering. What happened was that he owned a construction company that

had been hired to build a subway station; and in such a major public project, in order to qualify for federal aid, the contracted firm has to sub-contract work to a certain number of firms owned and operated by minorities, by non-whites. Now in very many cases these firms simply don't exist, particularly in something as highly specialized as digging an enormous tunnel under the river. So Donovan apparently created a firm and set it up with a black president, and life went on.

"Now if what the government alleged was true, there was a violation of the law. But it was decided to make it a criminal-trial violation, in no small part because the prosecutors would have a big, widely publicized case on their hands. The trial, all in all, lasted two, maybe three, years. But Donovan's lawyers did not summon a single witness because, in the whole court procedure, there had not been a shred of real evidence. It was so outrageous it took your breath away. Obviously, it would never have gone to court had Donovan not been a big fish. And the first thing he said after his acquittal was, 'It's true that justice has been served. I am a free man. But would you now kindly inform me to which government office I should apply to get my reputation back.' It really was a wonderfully apt line."

Finally, I ask Wolfe about the surprisingly strong contingent of "Brits" in his novel's Cecil B. De Mille-sized cast. It happens to be an English journalist, one Peter Fallon, who first noses out the potential of a scoop behind the apparently anodyne hit-and-run incident in the Bronx; and through Fallon's dishevelled expatriate existence the reader is introduced into Leicester's, a raffish bar rather transparently based on Mortimer's, a currently fashionable "Brit" watering-hole on Lexington Avenue.

"I wanted to take the biggest bite possible out of New York," he tells me, "and to me the British expatriates form a significant group in the 80s, especially in journalism. There are still waves of immigrants to this city, but they tend less and less to be the 'huddled masses' of old and more and more to be intellectuals who have come here to make it big."

Like most New Yorkers, Wolfe is in two minds about the British. On the one hand, in matters of style, he insists that Americans continue to suffer from a genuine inferiority complex, convinced that "the Brits have it all sewn up". On the other hand, . . .

"I lost a few friends in the British colony last year when I reviewed Hugo Vickers's biography of Cecil Beaton and recalled that recently, in some expensive Manhattan restaurant, when an Englishman picked up the cheque, the whole room stood up and cheered. I'm not sure why it should be that the English, whom I know to be a polite and generous race at home, have acquired in New York—and not altogether unjustly—the reputation of being supercilious and stingy."

This time it is my turn to grin ruefully. "But it's true," he says. "Even when an Englishman over here pays you a compliment, something like 'Oh, you Americans, you're so generous', you feel, underneath, he's thinking, 'Poor dumb suckers, you don't know any better.'" ○



There really is no longer
anything you could
call a working class in
this country

When Anthony Cavendish sent off his 160 page, privately printed, missive last Christmas to 500 members of the political and Whitehall establishment, he may not have expected quite such a reaction from the Government.

The Illustrated London News is, of course, prohibited, like every other publication, from using extracts from the book, but we have asked two recipients of the "Christmas card", Enoch Powell and Jonathan Aitken, as well as the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Roy Hattersley, to discuss the book.



Former MI6 officer Anthony Cavendish, author of *Inside Intelligence*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE



Jonathan Aitken

It can safely be said that nothing in this book could have any bearing on current national security

The best read of the surfeit of spy literature I received over Christmas was Anthony Cavendish's memoirs. They are commendably brief (160 pages), free to the author's 500 best friends, and contain many ripping yarns from the days of yore and gore when characters like Biggles, Bulldog Drummond, Dick Barton and our hero Tony C. himself sorted out spots of bother around the globe on behalf of British Intelligence.

To those interested in the legal niceties, it can safely be said that nothing in this book could possibly have any bearing on current national security. The youthful Cavendish was an action man on the fringes of the great game, and in any event he was abruptly rusticated from MI6 in 1951 for having rather too many spots of his own bother with girls and fast cars, even though he had already won the accolade of being described by Maurice Oldfield as "the cleverest young officer I ever recruited".

How clever Cavendish really was will remain a subject for debate between his friends and some of "the friends" at Century House, but as a colourful life-

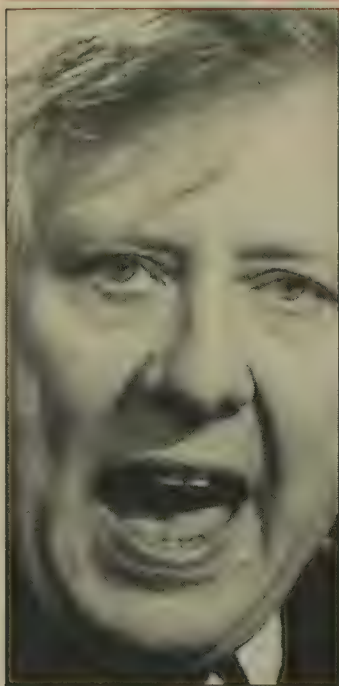
enhancing character he would seem hard to beat. His post-MI6 life as a journalist and entrepreneur makes his spying days seem positively tedious. By the time the reader has shared the author's ring-side seat at the spectacle of the world events; crashed a few cars with him; enjoyed his introduction to old pals like Tito, Gomulka and Chou En-lai; thundered with him around Silverstone and the Cresta Run, it almost seems as though James Bond was a rather dull 6 stone weakling by comparison.

But at the end of all the derring-do, *Inside Intelligence* has a single and serious purpose—to defend the reputation of the late Sir Maurice Oldfield against allegations of homosexuality. The last 20 pages of Cavendish's book relate to events after he left the security service and go deep into the murky waters of Northern Ireland feuding between MI5 and MI6, are revealing about internal SIS politics, and even contain an intriguing new theory about Harold Wilson's resignation. The lay reader can only guess whether Cavendish is flying well intentioned kites for the sake of an old friend or whether he is advancing a valid thesis on solid factual foundation. At the very least, *Inside Intelligence* is an honourable oblation on the tomb of friendship which will have an intriguing niche in the fast-expanding annals of security service literature.

The Government's response to Cavendish's offering has been characteristically muddled. I do not know who makes the decisions among the *Iolanthe*-like cast of characters in and around the Law Officers' department, but this time their judgments are well up to the standards of comic opera. The Treasury Solicitor, evidently in a dither over Cavendish's ingenious ploy of sending out 500 Christmas stocking fillers, went on record as saying that no action at civil or criminal law would be taken against *Inside Intelligence* because he has received "satisfactory assurances" from the author. Translation: It's all right to distribute your memoirs to 500 chums if you're rich enough to pay the costs of publishing them personally.

However, when various newspapers sought to publish extracts from the same material, m'learned friends threw injunctions around Fleet Street like confetti and have achieved at least a temporary ban on the book's serialization. All this is totally barmy. The notion that there is a magic circle of privileged insiders to whom these memoirs can lawfully be published while a wider audience is simultaneously banned from reading them, on the grounds that the same law has been broken, is pure gibberish. At the moment litigation in this field is inconsistently imposed by iron whim. It is not a tenable situation from anyone's point of view. This is why Richard Shepherd MP's Private Member's Bill should be seen as a wise and cautious redrawing of the lines around certain categories of information which need protection by the criminal law.

It is a difficult Bill to quarrel with, not merely because it is a patriotic and thoroughly sensible shot at reforms (which ironically will make it easier for the Crown to get convictions against the Wrights and Pontings) but also because 90 per cent of the Shepherd Protection of Information Bill of 1988 is exactly the same as the Thatcher-Whitelaw Protection of Information Bill of 1979. Just why we are being ordered to oppose it, no one quite knows.



Roy Hattersley

The intriguing question is why we must be kept in ignorance

Anthony Cavendish qualifies for two separate entries in the *Guinness Book of Records*. He has composed the longest Christmas card ever written. And he is the author of the most boring spy story ever published. The spy story was printed as a Christmas card because the Government intimidated the publishing house which proposed to produce it. Reading *Inside Intelligence* it is impossible not to conclude that the publisher had a lucky break.

Had *Inside Intelligence* been published commercially it would not—to describe the situation as generously as possible—have become a best seller. However, thanks to the absurdity of the Government, Mr Cavendish's Christmas card has gained a notoriety which it in no way deserves. No doubt it will soon be published in Australia and America and, with the Attorney General as his publicity agent, the author will probably make a fortune. But the contents are about as significant as those contained in Peter Wright's *Spycatcher*. And that is very insignificant indeed.

The style is sub Len Deighton and I hope that I do not contra-

vene the law by quoting an example: "Cavendish, get over here. The weekend of May 25-27, 1951 proved to be a memorable one. May is always a beautiful time in Berlin and in those days Berliners, those surrounded by the Soviet zone, often took picnics to the Grunewald."

As far as I know, the pattern of spring weather in Berlin is not classified information. More important, there is nothing in Margaret Thatcher's record to suggest that she prohibits publication on the grounds of execrable prose style. Can it be that *Inside Intelligence* contains information which would be of benefit to enemy or potential enemy.

Soviet Union knows already

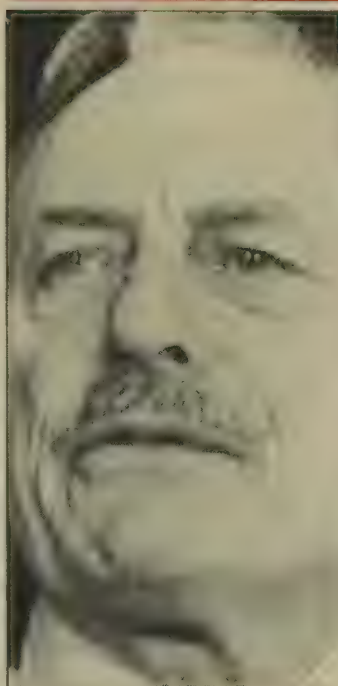
The sole conclusion to which the reader can come is that the only Soviet agents who would be assisted by Mr Cavendish's book are those who have not read the English newspapers over the last 10 years. The contentious passages invariably concern matters which are common knowledge. The author acknowledges his sources.

"Ten years ago or so, in 1978, Barrie Penrose and Roger Courtier published a book called *The Pencourt File*. Two months after the Prime Minister resigned these two investigative journalists had been summoned by Harold Wilson . . . who had told them, amongst other things, that he suspected the loyalty of certain senior MI5 officers."

Mr Cavendish concludes that the accusation was "extraordinary"—not in itself a contentious conclusion. He goes on to describe a *Sunday Times* story which alleged MI5 complicity to the Ulster "loyalists' strike" of 1976. He "confesses" that the story "ties in with many events to which I have been privy over the last 10 years". But that revelation is not to the benefit of the Russians—only the discredit of the security services.

In fact, reading Anthony Cavendish is rather like reading Peter Wright. Whatever the reason for the suppression of his extended Christmas card, it is not the fear that the Soviet Union will analyse every word. What he has written the Soviet Union knows already. It is the British people who must not be told.

The intriguing question is why we must all be kept in ignorance. Is it to protect the reputation of the security services or is it in order to maintain the Prime Minister's reputation for inflexible determination? Whatever the reason it has given Mr Cavendish's little novella a notoriety which it certainly does not deserve.



Enoch Powell

He does nothing to illuminate the whole Oldfield mission in Ulster

What Mr Cavendish's motive could have been for writing and privately publishing and distributing this book I am blessed if I know. Carelessly written, confused and repetitive, it is padded out with not very interesting details, complete with name-dropping, of the author's doings. He was in Security Intelligence Middle East in 1946-49 after commissioning into the Intelligence Corps, and then, after his demobilization in 1949, in the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), counter-espionage section (R5), in occupied Germany and Berlin and subsequently in Austria until his services were dispensed with in 1953. He then used his intelligence contacts as a journalist employed by United Press and as a marketing consultant for a series of private firms. ("With the help of old SIS friends I was able to put together various mammoth deals for the sale of armaments to the Shah's forces.")

The author was a great admirer of the late Sir Maurice Oldfield, under whom he worked at various points between 1946 and 1953 and with whom he maintained friendly contacts until his death. The last 20 pages of the book amount to an

apologia for Sir Maurice, who was recalled from retirement in October, 1979 to be appointed co-ordinator of security in Northern Ireland, but resigned on June 12, 1980 "for reasons of health". He died in March, 1981. On St George's Day, 1987 the Prime Minister in a Commons written answer disclosed that in March, 1980 Oldfield "made an admission that he had from time to time engaged in homosexual activities" and "his positive vetting clearance was withdrawn".

Mr Cavendish is at great pains to play down the significance of Sir Maurice's admission and to allege "a black propaganda campaign" against him "started in 1972, increased the year later when he became chief of MI6 and reinforced with a vengeance in 1979 when it became known that he was to be the new Security Supremo for Northern Ireland".

The background of the appointment appears to have been MI6's activities in Ulster when MI5 considered Northern Ireland to be its exclusive sphere of operation. [On the advice of the *ILN* lawyer we have had to remove Mr Powell's direct quotation from the book because it may be in breach of the Government's injunction against other publications—The Editor.]

The whole Oldfield mission in Ulster has never been satisfactorily accounted for, and Cavendish does nothing to illuminate it. Maybe there was conflict there (but over what?) between MI5 and MI6; but why "when Edward Heath first ordered MI6 into Northern Ireland" did it "add a new and dangerous flavour to operations in Ulster"? That Oldfield was brought out of retirement "to reorganize from scratch the whole intelligence empire in Northern Ireland" because "smear campaigns were being organized against anybody of consequence who appeared to be sympathetic to the position of the Catholic minority in Ulster or who showed that he believed in a settlement based on radical changes in the Northern-Southern relationship" is incomprehensible. Those have been the steady purposes of government generally since the 1960s, as witness their culmination thus far in the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

To allege that "among those targeted were Edward Heath, Harold Wilson, Edward Short, roughly 20 other MPs, and also the first catholic Chief Constable of the RUC, James Flanagan" makes total nonsense. No doubt HMG has been, and still is, bent on easing Ulster out of the United Kingdom; but that HMG's agents, whoever they might be, were organizing "smear campaigns" against such a weird assortment of notables beggars belief. "Spiritual wickedness in high places" there well may be; but at least satanic operations, when revealed, require to be rational. Or are we being told that MI5 are a bunch of crypto-Unionists? That would indeed be odd.

HIGH EXCITEMENT

Ski-touring on virgin snow is an attractive alternative to crowded downhill runs.

Robert Hutchison braved the Haute Route between Chamonix and Zermatt, and found the weather as formidable as the area's glaciated peaks

PINSON DEVOUASSOUX was furious. It was 9am and I was an hour late for our rendezvous at the Lognan *téléférique* station. He had left for the nearest bar, less than a mile away, where he had ordered a *blanc limé*, his customary morning refresher. "It's too late to start now," he said. "You might as well go home. Maybe tomorrow, but somehow I doubt it."

I had arrived back in Chamonix the night before, and had been slow in packing my rucksack with everything needed for five days on the Haute Route to Zermatt. It was early April and we had planned to ski it before the Easter rush began.

Pinson, whose real name is Serge, is a member of the Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix. He is called Pinson, which in French means finch, because as a boy he whistled all day long. We had been skiing and climbing partners for five years and had got to know each other well, better in fact than most friends of longer standing. In the mountains everything is intensified: emotions, moods, but especially your trust in the person on the other end of a climbing rope.

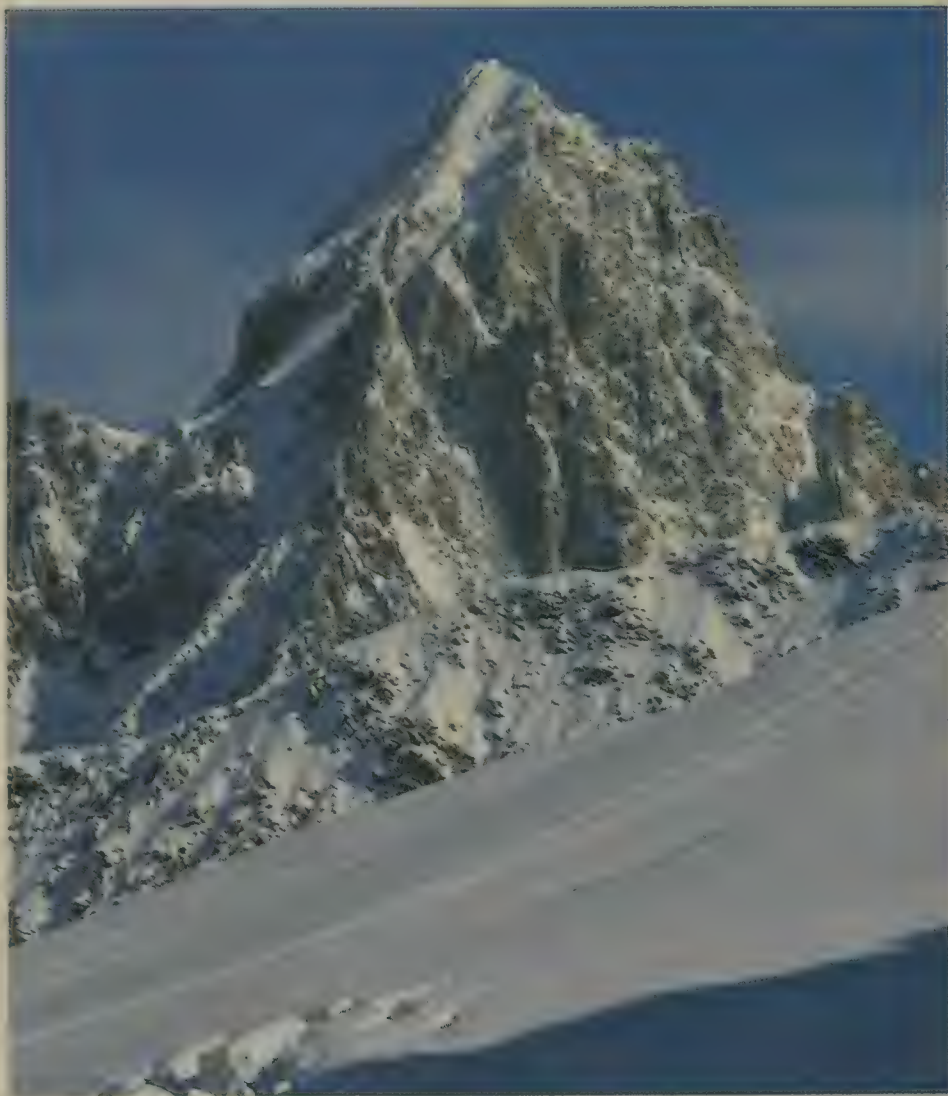
There are several different ways to do the Haute Route, but we had decided on the classic one: from Argentière over the Plateau de Trient to Verbier and then to the Cabane des Dix, the Vignettes and the Col de Valpelline, descending in the shadow of the Matterhorn to the chalet-lined streets of Zermatt—75 miles of snow over eight major passes, studded by a dozen 13,000 foot peaks—some of the most breath-taking scenery Europe can offer.

I finally prevailed on Pinson that, no matter what, we were going. But I could tell by the way he set his jaw and the sparsity of dialogue between us that this was not going to be a leisurely yomp. He was determined to make up for lost time. Already we were late; we were supposed to have started the previous afternoon with two other friends, Polo Bellin and Gérard Metral, also from Argentière.

We loaded our gear into the Grands Montets cable car which whisked us to the Col des Grands Montets. It was windy at 11,000 feet and the sunshine which had so pleased me earlier that morning was losing out to a thickish soup oozing over the Aiguille Verte.

Looking at the greying sky, each of us had our doubts but said nothing, snapping on skis and fastening rucksacks securely on our backs, in haste to begin the descent to the Argentière glacier. Once we reached the glacier floor, we coasted as far as we could across the flats, then stopped to fit seal-skin strips under our skis for the two-hour climb to the Col du Chardonnet, on the border with Switzerland.

Halfway up the tongue of ice between the peaks of the Chardonnet and Argentière, the last of the blue sky faded to grey and the wind



The Aiguille du Chardonnet seen from Les Grands Montets, Argentière and, below, the author

gusted from the west. Pinson did not like the phalanx of clouds mustering over the Jura mountains, 40 miles behind us. I was beginning to regret my persistence. But it was too late to turn back.

We wasted no time in removing our seal skins. An almost vertical corridor down to the Glacier of Saleina, 300 feet below, had to be negotiated as quickly as possible. There was little point in speaking as the wind swallowed our words, but we knew exactly what had to be done. Sometimes the corridor can be sheeted in ice, in which case a rope is needed, but we found its neck stuffed with new snow, so we zig-zagged down the first third on foot before putting on our skis again. Little *tourbillons* of wind sent snow into every crack in our clothing, and cold fingers made me quicken my side-slipping until I could stem left and jump the *rimaye*—the crevasse between the rock of the



mountain and the ice of the glacier.

Pinson went like a locomotive. He wanted to cross the Plateau de Trient to the Col des Ecandies before we were completely enveloped in cloud. By the time we rounded the shoulder of the col we had been moving steadily for almost five hours. We had a short rest, a drink and a bite of chocolate. We wanted to get to Verbier before the *téléferique* closed.

The snowfall of the previous night had obliterated all tracks on the 4 mile run down to Champex. We were beneath the clouds, in the lee of the wind, and the grey light made it difficult to see the contours. But we had the whole mountain to ourselves apart from a couple of hares whose tracks criss-crossed in front of our skis. In spite of the mediocre visibility it was the kind of carefree skiing that could never be found on a groomed slope. Pinson was even smiling when we reached the lake of Champex an hour later. He pounded me on the shoulder. "*Sacré Robert. Ça te va?*" he asked. Thirsty, I said: "There's a café over there. How about a beer?" No time.

We thumbed a ride to the Relais des Neiges, opposite the Verbier *téléferique* station, and caught the last cable car to the top of the Atte-las. All that remained was a 20 minute ski to the Refuge de Mont Fort, where we arrived at nightfall, assured of a warm meal and a bed for the night. Going like a train, we had completed in one day what most skiers do in two and a half. We were pleased because we had caught up with Pierrot Ravel, another Argentiè-re guide, and his three French clients, but Gérard and Polo were still a day ahead of us.

Before sunrise next morning, using head-lamps to light our way, we continued to the Col de la Chau. The air was so still that the stars seemed to crackle. The snow was like silk. When we reached the Grand Desert, a huge glacier sloping down from the Rosablanche (11,000 feet), the rising sun cast orange shadows across the Bernese Oberland. To our right, 40 miles away, was Mont Blanc, with the Grandes Jorasses rising like the bow of a ship above the Mer de Glace to its left, and closer to us the white mantle of the Grand Combin rising at over 14,000 feet.

A layer of powder on a hard spring base covered the Mourt glacier, which carried us on an 8 mile descent to the frozen Lac des Dix. After lunch by the lake, we began the climb to the Glacier du Cheilon. The sun was hot and the mountains glistened. Our view of the overhanging ice dome of Mont Blanc du

Cheilon and the snow-covered bowl curving around to the Pigne d'Arolla was grandiose. Plumes of snow swirled away from the Serpentine between the two peaks and swept down the glacier to kiss us.

The Cabane des Dix, a five-star lodging among mountain huts, was on the far side of the Tête Noire, about 2 miles away. "You'll see it only minutes before you get there," Pinson explained. And with that he set off at full speed to order a bottle of Fendant for my arrival.

I rounded the shoulder of the Tête Noire, expecting to see the cabane ahead of me. Nothing. I cursed and looked up at the hot sun, about to wipe the sweat from my forehead when I saw the hut sitting on top of the Tête Noire, 600 feet above. My heart sank. The last half-hour was killing, but finally I made it to the door of the refuge at 1 pm. After Pinson, I was the first of the horde of skiers from Mont Fort to arrive. It had taken us eight hours to get there; we had climbed 5,300 vertical feet *en route* with 30 lb rucksacks, and I was exhausted. Still no sign of Polo and Gérard.

Forget the Fendant. Pinson pushed a glass of hot tea into my hand. With the loss of body temperature from the outflow of energy, I was shivering. Two hours in the bunk, and then back downstairs for a game of *belotte*, a Savoyard card game, with Pinson and Pierrot. The wind was now whining and the sky over-cast, obscuring the Pigne d'Arolla which we planned to climb the following day.

Dinner was cream of vegetable soup and beef stew, liberally washed down with Dole, a fruity red wine from Canton Valais. By 10 pm it was impossible for us to keep our eyes open.

Next morning no one was talking. The storm had broken with incredible fury. To climb the Pigne d'Arolla was out of the question. We decided that rather than wait out the storm we would take an escape route over the Pas de Chèvres, a lower pass that was still under the cloud ceiling.

The wind took our breath away as we skied off the Tête Noire. We literally sailed across the Glacier de Cheilon, finding some shelter against the cliffs on the far side of the valley. We lashed our skis to our packs and climbed through the rocks to the top of a broken snow saddle.

We schussed down the backside of the Pigne, then traversed over a steep moraine that was as bald as a billiard ball and seemed more than 650 feet high. As we rounded its shoulder, blocks of snow started breaking away only a few feet in front of us. Pinson was uneasy. He

told me to stay a good distance behind him. We were attempting to reach the Cabane des Vignettes, our last stop before Zermatt, but we never made it.

It was snowing heavily and the visibility becoming more limited by the minute. Nearing a ridge at 10,000 feet we rested, our faces burning from the driven snow that chipped our cheeks. Between the breaks in the cloud we made out a party of 15 people standing like a flock of goats, immobilized by the wind, near the top of the next ridge.

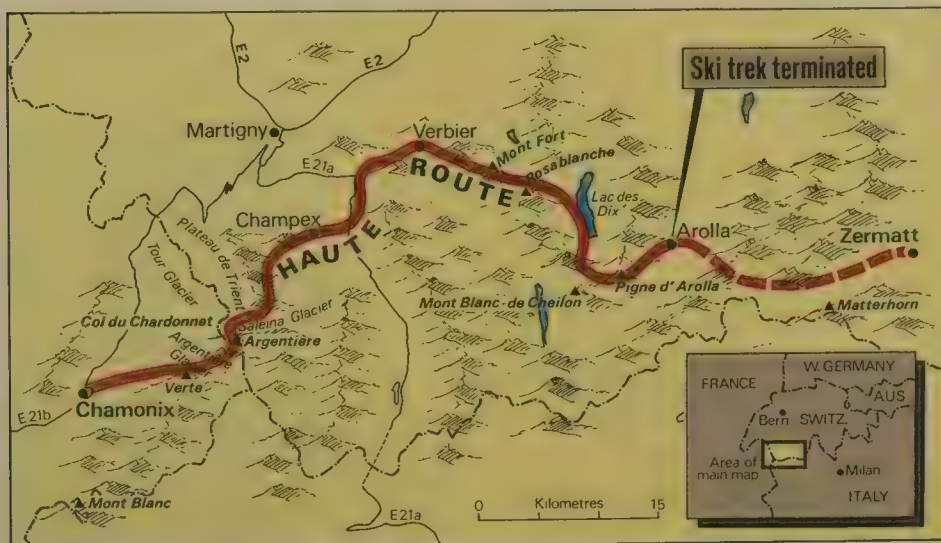
When the group was about 500 feet away they skied towards us. "Impossible to go further," one of them shouted at us. "It's spring down here compared to what it's like on the ridge."

We pushed on anyway, the wind howling at us through the rocks on the backside of the Pigne. The Cabane des Vignettes was out of sight, still another hour away in good weather, two hours in bad, and an eternity in conditions like this. On the ridge we were even more exposed. A first gust hit us. We glued our skis to the snow and, crouching, held on to our sticks. We moved forward another few feet before being hit by a second blast. The gusts were later estimated to be in the 80 mph range. They pushed me backwards, my overalls flapping, the straps on the pack snapping at my back.

"No way, Robert. We're going down," Pinson shouted as he was pushed by me. I let the wind roll me back into a snow bowl, where I sat down and ripped off my skins, stuffing them into my pockets. I was disappointed. We skied down to Arolla and on the way the snow turned to rain. We could still hear the wind raging off the mountains more than 6,000 feet above us.

We reached Arolla at midday and made our way to a hotel with a carved wooden front in the centre of the village. The hotelkeeper was doing a brisk business. More than 30 skiers, many of them friends from Chamonix and Argentiè-re, like ourselves beaten back by the weather, were drinking wine and tucking into a welcome *casse-croute*. At one of the tables we saw Polo and Gérard, halfway through a litre of Fendant, a steaming fondue in front of them. They had waited for us at Les Vignettes. When they left the hut that morning they were almost blown off the ridge. No question of continuing to Zermatt. It would have been suicide, so like everyone else, they skied down to Arolla.

In spite of our defeat, spirits were high and the Fendant flowed like streams off the mountain. It was instant release from the tensions created by the storm. We ate *croûtes au fromage*, then pooled our resources to rent a bus to take us back to Argentiè-re. With frequent stops for a glass of Fendant, what normally is a three-hour trip took us six. Indeed, for some of us, the final approach to our front door was the most treacherous part of the journey ○



Every winter the Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix organizes several seven-day Haute Route ski treks for an all-in price of FF 3,750 (£375) per person. This includes one guide for every four to six persons, food, hut accommodation and cable-car transport. Participants must be equipped with Alpine touring skis and a rucksack with a change of warm clothing, and be the equivalent of a Class 2A International—i.e. intermediate—skier. If, however, you want to organize your own "ski raid," guides can be hired for FF 1,000 (£100) per day. For more information contact the Bureau des Guides, Maison de la Montagne, 190 Place de l'Eglise, 74400 Chamonix, France (telephone 5053 0088).

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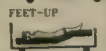
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The boat in the lake

Shelley Wachsmann reports on a fascinating find in Israel

IN AN EXCITING rescue dig, Israeli archaeologists have saved the first ancient wreck ever found in the Sea of Galilee. The boat has been dated to the early Roman period, perhaps when Jesus ministered to the local fishermen or when, in AD 67, the lake was turned red with the blood of Jews rebelling against Roman rule at the sea battle of Migdal.

In January, 1986, a drought had caused the shoreline of the Sea of Galilee to recede, revealing much of the bottom of the lake. Yuval and Moshe Lufan, keen amateur archaeologists and members of the local Kibbutz Ginosar, took the opportunity to look for ancient wrecks. Where the wheels of a tractor had stuck in the mud and brought up bronze coins, the brothers investigated further and found iron nails and then the edge of a wooden plank buried in the mud. They had found their wreck.

News of a "possibly ancient" discovery was relayed to the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums. As the Department's nautical archaeologist I was rushed to the site the following day. On opening a small section of the uppermost plank, we immediately found remains of mortise and tenon joinery, a type of ship construction employed in the Mediterranean from the second millennium BC until the end of the Roman period.

When news of the discovery leaked to the Press, the wreck was immediately nicknamed "the Jesus boat". The name fired public imagination even though it lacked any archaeological basis beyond the estimated date of the craft.

The history of archaeology throughout the world is punctuated with lamentable episodes of sites destroyed when looters pre-empt archaeologists. To prevent this happening the boat's immediate excavation was ordered by the Department's director, Avraham Eitan.

An excavation usually takes months to plan and organize. Ours was to begin just days later. A team was quickly assembled. The presence of a ship reconstructionist was necessary to make sense of the hull that we would be uncovering. Professor J. Richard Steffy of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, Texas A & M University, agreed to come at short notice.

Meanwhile the Kinneret (the Hebrew name for the Sea of Galilee), receiving water from recent rain, had started to advance towards the boat. When we first viewed the site, the lake had been 30 metres away; on the eve of the excavation the waters had advanced to within 10 metres of the boat. The forecast was for more rain.

The excavation began. As night fell we



After the 11-day excavation, the Kinneret boat was floated to the Yigal Allon Museum in Kibbutz Ginosar where it was housed in a covered conservation pool complete with a glass-encased viewers' gallery

decided to work round the clock in a race against the rising waters. Gradually, in the eerie light of gas fishing lamps, the outline of the boat began to emerge.

To check the state of hull preservation we cut a section at midship. Lying on our stomachs in the cold wet mud we dug with our bare hands, in case the metal tools damaged the soft, waterlogged wood. Our excitement increased as a frame (rib) and planking appeared from beneath the mud. The hull was intact and well-preserved.

During the evening members of the Kinneret Authority in charge of the lake visited the site. When the position was explained to them, they suggested building an earthwork and sandbag dyke; they promised to return the following morning with men and materials.

By 6am the lake, whipped up by a strong easterly wind, was almost touching the boat. But the Kinneret Authority returned just in time and began work on the dyke. Although the lake continued to rise, there was no longer a problem with water.

As the wood was revealed, white plastic string was used to differentiate the planking; each wooden member was tagged. As mud was removed it was necessary to build a hanging scaffolding on which excavators worked while lying on their stomachs. The frame also supported a nylon tarpaulin which helped to protect the wood from the harsh rays of the sun. By the time Richard Steffy arrived, much of the boat's interior had been revealed and he was able to study it.

The archaeological part of the excavation was completed by the eighth day of the dig. The remaining time was spent on the conservation and packing of the boat prior to its removal to the Yigal Allon Museum in Kibbutz Ginosar.

The boat measures 8.2 metres by 2.3 metres; and although the wood looks sturdy, it is

actually waterlogged and unable to support its own weight. After consulting numerous experts our own conservationist, Orna Cohen, invented her own method for packaging the boat. She decided to strengthen the hull inside and out with fibreglass frames and trusses, and then to cover the entire boat with a polyurethane "strait jacket". The chemical, sprayed on as a dark liquid, quickly foams and hardens; under lamp-light it seemed to be a living substance engulfing the boat.

The following day we began to dig perpendicular tunnels beneath the boat; these revealed further details of its construction. Fibreglass trusses were passed through these tunnels and secured round the outside of the hull. They were

then filled with polyurethane foam which hardened into supportive external frames. With the vessel thus braced, the remaining mud was excavated in sections and the process repeated until the boat was "cocooned".

On the 11th day of the excavation a channel was dug through the dyke to the sea, and the boat sailed the placid waters of the Kinneret for the first time in two millennia. It was floated to the Allon Museum where it was placed on land.

A conservation pool was constructed in reinforced concrete. The boat was then lifted by crane and gently placed inside the pool. Laboriously the polyurethane was removed and the boat resubmerged to prevent the wood from drying out before conservation.

Richard Steffy's studies indicate that the boat was built by an expert shipwright following Mediterranean traditions. It was constructed largely of wood reused from earlier boats. The hull was deep with a rounded stern and a fine bow. The craft was probably sailed and rowed. It was no doubt multi-purpose, used for fishing and to carry passengers and goods.

Based on comparisons with Mediterranean ship construction, Steffy tentatively suggests a date between the first century BC and the second century AD for the boat. However, he notes that boat-building traditions may have lingered in the Kinneret long after they had gone out of use in the Mediterranean.

We will probably never know whether the Kinneret Boat had any part in the momentous events in Christian and Jewish history taking place at this time. But it affords us a detailed view of seafaring on the Kinneret for the first time in 2,000 years ○

Donations towards continued conservation of the boat should be sent to "Kinneret Boat", The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society, 3 St John's Wood Road, London NW8 8RB.

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Old money on the menu

Kingsley Amis appreciates an entertaining touch of class at Scott's

SCOTT'S RESTAURANT, in the form of Scott's Oyster and Supper Rooms, started life in Coventry Street by Leicester Square in 1891; the same premises had been an "oyster warehouse", owned by the proprietors of the London Pavilion Music Hall, since 1872. It was more recently, in 1956, that James Bond took his friend Bill Tanner there and stood him dressed crab with a pint of Black Velvet. (This was, of course, the Old Etonian Bond of the books, not the polymorphous bouncer of the films.) The restaurant moved to Mount Street, a step nearer the clubs of St James's, in 1967.

That year is not much longer ago than last Thursday afternoon by the standards of the English upper classes, and it is these classes and their traditional haunts that the place sets out to evoke, as my opening remarks were intended to show. So the décor is luxurious to the safe side of vulgarity: huge French paintings of the classical school or thereabouts, pillars faced with tarnished mirrors, fish and shellfish designs on bar-panels and blinds, heavy stone floor and ceiling. Edwardian Cannes, I thought to myself, though I would have had to know much more than I do to feel secure with either word.

About the American touches I felt myself on surer ground. Certain kinds of Americana have been as English as Lord's cricket ground since the first duke married the first Philadelphia heiress. Hence, I reckoned, the smaller paintings with their animal subjects and naïve style, and other nuances, harder to pin down, that echoed the clubs of the cities of the Eastern seaboard as much as those on the other side of Piccadilly. But any Americans present in the flesh were to be identified only by looking like photographs of American senators, nothing more noticeable. In Scott's nobody is noticeable except the ladies, and they only by their rarity. Actually I felt a bit conspicuous and flashy in my tweed jacket.

If I dwell on this side of things I do so because it is very much what you go there for, as one who belongs to it or would like to: on the bill there is a space where you may "please print name and company" (my italics). Alas for that, perhaps, though in no very heartfelt spirit. But whoever is paying, Scott's is the London restaurant that, far more than the Ritz, more than the Connaught, etc, stands for and epitomizes old money. And money is where the stress comes. More than I had ever expected, the place

is majestically, awe-inspiringly expensive.

But you (or your company) are not paying only for what you see. What you drink comes into it too. The wine list declares its English orientation by its eight pages of clarets and less than one of red burgundies. The finest of those clarets will cost you, and small wonder, but not so dizzily as in some lesser eating houses; and they start at £12, as hard-up patrons of Scott's must often have noted with relief. The clarets I shared with my guest seemed to us not

a bit up and down: an excellent Dry Martini, an Old-Fashioned that was shy on the Angostura and sugar, and a Dry Manhattan that was far from the break-through I had been waiting for.

The food was a little bit up and down too. The highs began with Imperial oysters, a designation apparently meaning super-fresh and gigantic, enough to leave my guest sated with a mere dozen for the first time in her life.

The crab cocktail was served in an apparently bottomless container; I had to leave some, most unwillingly, or be unable to continue the meal. The moules marinière were a costly disaster, with what should be the slight wateriness and saltiness of the liquor overwhelmed with cream, as if in assurance of money spent.

Back on track, the roast grouse exceeded expectation. It came with a kind of *bocadillo* of which a Spaniard never dreamed, a great toasted roll thickly smeared with a rich pâté of the liver, enough if eaten to keep a schoolboy anywhere happy for a couple of days. The braised oxtail successfully featured a great many white beans and needed only thicker and more abundant juice to have been first-rate. Indifferent liver but good bacon with it. Admirable lamb cutlets. Characterless vegetables and, most English of all, boring bread.

The service calls for a word. There was never at any time anything positively wrong with it, always efficient, never obtrusive—nobody was going to offer me a roll while I had a stick of asparagus in my mouth, as happened to me recently at a restaurant in Covent Garden. Like the gentleman's clothes, it perfectly escaped notice. I am probably just carping when I suggest that a large

part of what many people look forward to and remember about restaurants where eating is really enjoyable—I would instance the White Tower and Simpson's-in-the-Strand—is the welcome and the ever-present friendly attention. Something unEnglish about somewhere, I suspect.

For those who really appreciate the experience, and I have to say I was constantly interested and entertained, the prices at Scott's are not too high ○



PAT FOGARTY

overpriced for the type of establishment and were in perfect condition, though the place is quite old enough to know better than to serve an ordinary table wine in one of those basket affairs. If it needs decanting, decant it; otherwise let the bottle stand upright.

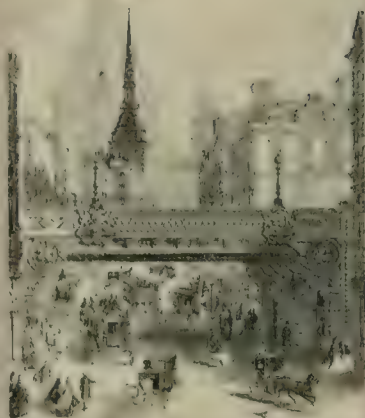
Cocktails were always a great feature of the more Anglo-American end of the bon-vivant scene and plenty are on offer here, including some that I with all my erudition had never heard of. It is much more Anglo than American to list the name of the mixture only and keep quiet about what it consists of; in America they tell you things, in England anyone who counts is supposed to *know*. The cocktails I tried were

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Banish the February blues

Matthew Fort prescribes mutton, mashed parsnip and a bottle of Barolo

FEBRUARY is a dud month. February lacks January's grandeur. It has none of March's hints of spring (frequently false, admittedly). Its days are dank and drab and endless, and the dankest, drabbest, longest days in all of February are February Sundays, which stretch out into an infinitude of dreary, hectoring, admonitory Sunday newspapers. What is to be done with February?

My advice is to abandon the Sunday newspapers for a start. You will find an enormous weight lifted from you. You will be liberated from the monstrous tyranny of newsprint. New vistas will open up. You will be able to look that third sausage in the eye at the breakfast table without being torn by the terror of a coronary so graphically illustrated in the colour supplement. You may even have the strength to face your own children. And you will be free to give to the matter of lunch the consideration that it deserves.

Sunday lunch is never to be taken lightly. I have no time for people who "brunch" on Sunday, or on any other day of the week come to that; or who dismiss it in a sea of mince and mash. In summer you may make do with a little free-range *poulet à l'estragon*, new potatoes still musty from the earth, a spoonful or so of tiny peas, a bowl of scarlet strawberries being given the little princes in the tower treatment by a thick tidal wave of unpasteurized Jersey cream. In February you need something more substantial. In February you need boiled mutton.

Whatever happened to mutton? Once upon a time we liked meat to taste of something and were not afraid of an ounce or two of fat. Now we gobble down immature animals that have not seen out their first birthday, whose flesh has a vague sweet flavour and which sticks to our teeth. True mutton comes from a sheep over three years old, and the economics of farming ensure that not too many sheep live that long. There is quite a lot of capital invested in a sheep, so not surprisingly farmers prefer us to eat the younger animals. And does the butcher want to sell one smelly old mutton leg when he can sell you two sweet little lamb legs at premium prices? He does not, but he can probably be prevailed upon to produce one for you if you insist nicely.

Then trim the fat off it, cut the sinews at the first joint to help it keep its shape, and bung it into a pot of cold water along with a carrot, a turnip and an onion or two and whatever herbs you can lay your hands on. Now it is ready to cook, for several hours—about 15 minutes to the pound after it has come to the boil, according to the indispensable *Katherine Mellish's Cookery Book* published in 1901; and you are free to talk to your family, have a glass or two of something agreeable and make a sauce to go with the mutton.

Mutton, for all its admirable qualities, needs a sauce. Without sauce it is filling and full of



flavour, but rather inert. With the right sauce it takes on new life. The traditional accompaniments are onion sauce and caper sauce—Mrs Mellish recommends a pint of the latter. Mrs Mellish is not someone I would cross lightly, but I think mutton needs a touch of the exotic to make it really hum. How does boiled mutton with *salsa verde alla mantovana* strike you?

Two hard-boiled eggs, two medium-sized carrots, one small celery stalk, four anchovy fillets, two tablespoons of capers, one tablespoon of pine nuts, sprigs and sprigs of parsley, 10 little cornichons, one sweet red pepper, salt, pepper and half a cup of olive oil is all you need, according to Giuliano Bugialli in *The Taste of Italy* (Octopus), to which I add some shredded lemon peel. All you have to do is chop the whole lot up, by hand.

There is no way round this. It is time-

consuming, and fiddly, and, in fact, is best done the day before while listening to the afternoon play on the radio or singing along with *Turandot* on your Walkperson. But the result will be a magnificent, pungent, jewelled oily sludge, a wonderful dancing partner for the lumbering mutton.

Set off this intrepid pairing with some mashed swede, mashed parsnip and plain boiled cabbage. Tempted though you may be to whizz the swede and the parsnip up in the food processor, resist it. The problem with food processors is that they produce a kind of homogenized slush. Mash them by hand with a masher, or, better still, put them through a hand mouli, and then beat them full of eggs, butter, cream and air.

Epics could be written about boiled cabbage. Under the baleful influence of memories of school food, many of us view it in much the same way as one would view a toad on one's plate, with fear and loathing. I used to, once. Now I am converted. Plain boiled cabbage, savoy in this case, cut into sections, soaked in cold water for a couple of hours and then plunged into gallons of salted boiling water until just cooked, will banish those schoolday memories for ever.

Already Sunday is beginning to take on a new *gravitas*. There may be life in February after all. To make sure there is, open a bottle of something robust. You could try one of those lovely, full-flavoured numbers from the Rhône—St Joseph le Grand Pompée, Vacqueyras or Lirac—but I would plump for another Italian touch. Roll out the Barolo, at least eight years old, preferably older, or the prodigiously chunky Aglianico del Vulture from Calabria.

By this time even the most violent pangs of hunger should have been stilled. Civilized conversation should have broken out around the table, but we must not relax. We must move in smartly with a Sussex Pond Pudding. There is nothing in the gastronomies of France, Italy, Germany, Spain or any civilized country to compare with the true glories of English puddings: jam roly-poly, or trifle or summer pudding, let alone of the Sussex Pond Pudding.

Jane Grigson can instruct you in the precise way to construct this masterpiece in *English Food* (Penguin). One could describe it simply as being just a suet pudding filled with butter and brown sugar and lemon, but this in no way does justice to its full magnificence, to the broken crust of suet settled in the fragrant brown pool originally contained within it. It is a pudding to spit in the face of modern dietary theory, a pudding to banish the February blues ○

Matthew Fort is co-author of the Peter Fort column for the Financial Times

OVERTURE

Thyssen's best paintings come to the RA



SALLY SOAMES

At 66, Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza is more interesting for his philanthropy than his philandering, he is even developing a sense of humour

BARON Hans-Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza conforms to that once witty definition of a playboy: he is a man who collects Old Masters and young mistresses. Where he differs from the norm is that he is generous in the exhibition of both. Hardly a year goes by without a part of his remarkable collection going on show in Britain and his five wives and many companions have adorned the social pages of Europe for over 30 years.

Were it not for his brilliant acquisitiveness in the art market the Baron—Heini to his friends—would raise about as much interest as that other renowned Continental playboy, Gunther Sachs. The pair have remarkably similar provenances. Both derive their great wealth from Germany's iron and steel industry, both have spent a good deal of time wooing the smartest women in Europe, and both move in the same migratory patterns around the expensive venues and mating grounds of what is still archaically called the jet set.

The Baron has indeed lived a very colourful life. The five wives have been picked almost, it would seem, to mirror the development of the European Economic Community. Britain followed Germany and now Spain is represented in the Baron's household by the fair shape of Carmen Cerveza. The only exception to this was Denise Shorto who came from Brazil.

In one sense these regular divorces have been useful because the recorded settlements help estimate the increasing size of the Baron's wealth. The first three wives, Princess Zur Lipp, Nina Dyer and Fiona Campbell-Walters settled for amounts under £1 million, with jewels, villas and fashion-house accounts thrown in. But the fourth, Miss Shorto, claimed a magnificent £100 million which she estimated to be a tenth of his total wealth. The Baron counterclaimed by demanding the return of the \$4.5 million apartment in New York and jewellery worth £80 million. Suffice it to say that the couple, who had not been on good terms,

eventually reached an arrangement, but the figures do give an idea of the extraordinary orders of magnitude in which the Baron deals.

Today, at 66, the Baron appears to have settled down. After his wedding to Carmen Cerveza 18 months ago, held somewhat incongruously at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, he has put on weight and become more relaxed. His friends say that he is even developing a sense of humour. In short, the Baron today is more interesting for his philanthropy than his philandering.

In March, 50 of the best paintings in his collection of 1,400 Old Masters go on show at the Royal Academy in London. They include Hans Holbein's great portrait of Henry VIII (sold by the Spencer family in the 1930s), a panel by Duccio, another by Albrecht Dürer, a Canaletto, a Frans Hals and a group of portraits from the Northern European renaissance. They represent the cream of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection and the work of two very acquisitive

personalities, the Baron and his father. The collection is of one family's taste and is interesting for that alone.

The Thyssens' wealth goes back three generations to August Thyssen, a great steel and coal magnate who was born in Belgium on a farm near Aachen. On his death his enormous estate was divided between Fritz, his elder son, and Heinrich, who moved to Hungary and acquired for himself a Hungarian title, a large country house called Rechnitz and a wife of mixed American and Hungarian parentage.

He was a classic example of second-generation wealth and he gained for himself the culture and connoisseurship that the great August had not had time for. Heinrich, however, was by no means a profligate. He was a man who bought well and, unlike his brother's side of the family, foresaw that his position and great wealth would not cushion him against the threat of National Socialism in Germany. As Hitler took over, Heinrich bought the Villa Favorita in Lugano and concentrated his operations in Switzerland, away from his other base at Groeningen in the Netherlands (where Heini had been born in 1921). This rather astute move ensured the safety of both his paintings and his family (Fritz's family were penalized under Hitler and Fritz himself was incarcerated in a concentration camp).

The lean years after the 1929 Crash were exceptionally important for the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection. Much was on the market but there was little cash to buy it. Heinrich solved this by taking out loans to acquire his major paintings. These were suspended during the war and afterwards the family negotiated a deal through a socialist minister of the Dutch government which meant that they paid only a fraction of the paintings' true worth.

A collection of pictures such as will go on show next month is not built up just by money. There is, if you like, a most powerful lust involved. The word lust is not too strong when you have heard the Baron talking about his painting by Domenico Ghirlandaio of Giovanna Tornabuoni: it is a portrait of a young Florentine girl in profile. She is aged perhaps 20 or 21, but in her formal pose resembles some of the magnificent likenesses struck by Roman metal workers. It is the Baron's favourite painting in the collection, although his father acquired it. "It is remarkable. She has an extraordinary beauty: there is another portrait of her in a fresco by Ghirlandaio. We believe it was painted posthumously, probably immediately after her death."

Occasionally, the acquisitive powers of the Villa Favorita have earned the displeasure of academics. As the prices rose on the art market in the late 1960s, the Baron came to the attention of one Dr Rodolfo Siviero who alleged, on behalf of the Italian authorities, that he possessed works of art that had been illegally smuggled from Italy. One in particular was a 13th-century carving of Christ, said to have been taken in pieces across the border to Switzerland, reassembled and then restored. The Baron maintained that he had bought this and other works legitimately in Switzerland, which was in fact the case.

He often finds himself in direct opposition to one of the big museums at auction, in particular the Cleveland Museum whose director has a similar taste. "You know, sometimes I have suggested that I won't bid against him on



St Catherine of Alexandria, with the instruments of her martyrdom, by Caravaggio

certain objects if he won't bid against me," the Baron says. "I remember one sale when he wanted a figure and I suggested that if he let me have something else I would not get in his way. He would not agree and in the end I got the figure after he had dropped out of the bidding."

It is difficult to define the Baron's taste or any other taste, so it is perhaps best to start by saying what the Thyssen-Bornemisza taste is not. It is not a taste that results from the pooling of received wisdoms in a committee, which is the case of the John Paul Getty Museum. Over the last years this foundation has had perhaps the greatest consistent buying power in the art market but has regularly failed to buy the truly great works of art that become available.

And his taste is certainly not that of a scholar. Latterly, British collectors, like Sir Denis Mahon and the late Count Seilern, have tended to view their works as a source of and excuse for academic investigation. This is no

bad thing, but pictures bought with art history as a principal aim are very different from those simply acquired for aesthetic reasons. The Baron inclines towards the latter and if there is a single unifying factor in the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection it is that the paintings have the quality of intimacy. They are works that bear up to frequent examination and hang well in private rooms. The best way of describing this is to draw the contrast between Rembrandt and Rubens, neither of whom is especially well-represented at the Villa Favorita. The first artist expresses, very quietly, the constant truths about the human condition while the second overwhelms one with the complexity and richness of his compositions.

The point about this refined, aesthetic taste is that it appears in a very hard, shrewd businessman. The Baron, after leaving the sheltered life of a Swiss university in wartime, did not become the typical third-generation dilettante, to spend his time luxuriating in his



The Annunciation by El Greco, an exuberant innovation of the mannerist school from Spain

inherited wealth and admiring his inherited collection. Rather, he expanded his fortune by shrewd investment and bought back the paintings that had been left to his siblings. He now owns some 1,400 Old Masters and has bought over 300 modern works of art.

He has the insouciance of the rich which belies his business sense. While the Press concentrated on his string of conquests, the Baron extended his financial empire throughout Europe and particularly in America. This was a bigger achievement than most give him credit for, because after the war much of his inheritance was embroiled in a legal web that would have intimidated most people. However, he freed much of it and took the decision to invest in Indian Head, a smallish service company in the US which has expanded beyond recognition. The number of the properties he owns has expanded too. Apart from the Villa Favorita, he has a large villa in Spain, a house in Chester Square, an apartment in New York and a

country seat built by Samuel Cockerell at Daylesford in Oxfordshire. He has offices in Monte Carlo and New York, although the running of his empire has now been handed over to his eldest child, Heinrich.

It may be that the Baron, as his previous wife claimed, is worth in excess of £1,000 million, but given the current state of the art market he is probably worth a great deal more, possibly £2,000 million. Even he is surprised by the figures being fetched in the salerooms of New York and London. "I could not believe the sale of van Gogh's *Irises*. I mean, he sold only one painting in his life and that was for 300 francs. It is a good painting. I like it better than the sunflowers . . . but over \$50 million is too much."

He has a reputation for being humourless which does not appear to be true. He is extremely funny about his relations with women and tells some good stories about his wives, especially Fiona Campbell-Walters, the third

Baroness. "She felt she had to explain everything, even if you knew about it already. She should have been a teacher or something. She used to talk in the car a lot. Now I am somebody who does not like to talk when I am driving. One day she said: 'You haven't been listening to me, have you?' 'No,' I replied, 'I haven't, but the melodious quality of your voice is such that I do not need to listen to what you're saying.'"

He admits that constant travelling has placed his four marriages under considerable strain. "You know, I don't think I have spent more than a week in the same place since the war. I am trying to cut down on this travelling, but it is very hard. There is something to attend to here, someone to see there. But I am older now and I feel it gets very tiring."

Tita, as Carmen, his fifth wife, is known, seems to be exerting some influence in this area, particularly since the Baron suffered what appeared to be an aneurysm last summer. It was not serious but he took it as a warning that the intensive socializing should be cut down. His devotion to the collection and the many exhibitions he arranges, however, has not diminished. He is still among the first to hear of particularly fine works of art coming on to the market and he and his staff still wade through an enormous number of catalogues each week. The greater part of the time is spent arranging exhibitions which are imaginatively conceived, so that exchanges between Russia and the West have been facilitated. (Incidentally, he did not offer his entire collection to the Soviet Union in exchange for the demolition of the Iron Curtain, as was reported last summer.)

The thing that is likeable about this extraordinarily rich man is that he genuinely wants to share the treasures of the Villa Favorita with as many as possible. He also has the attractive quality of knowing what he wants. He decided very soon after he inherited a string of good racehorses that he found horses, good or bad, fundamentally unedifying. The same is true of the yacht he owned. "After a while I felt that I was doing the same journey all the time with the same people." He sold it to Tiny Rowland and left the horse racing to his sister, Countess Margit Batthany. "Today, I'd much rather swim in the sea than own a yacht."

I wondered whether the Baron's restless life was merely a manifestation of boredom: whether his numerous wives, varying interests and interminable travel were simply as the result of a rich man's desire to divert himself. "No, I don't think so," he replied. "In fact, I get pleasure out of almost everything I do. I am very lucky."

He may be taking life a little more easily but when it comes to pictures he is still as predatory as he always was. When he married Carmen Cerveza, his sister Gabriele Baroness Bentick asked him what he would like for a wedding present. After five weddings she could be forgiven for running out of inspiration. She despaired and finally suggested, "I'd like to give you a picture but you have got so many already." The Baron replied that he would be pleased with a picture and named one on her wall. "But you can't have that, it's one of a pair," she protested. "Then I'll have the pair." He did ○

Old Master Paintings from the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection will be on show at the Royal Academy, Piccadilly from March 18 to June 12

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REVIEWS

Barbra Streisand again demonstrates her versatility in *Nuts*;
the ENO's *Hansel and Gretel* is stripped of schmaltz;
Michael Hordern presides triumphantly in Shaw at the Haymarket



DONALD COOPER

Barbra Streisand and Richard Dreyfuss in *Nuts*; Ethna Robinson and Cathryn Pope as the children in *Hansel and Gretel* at the Coliseum

CINEMA

A tough nut to crack

THERE IS nothing understated about Barbra Streisand. She suffers for having a personality so strong that it threatens to smother anyone who comes near. Her superabundant talents are regarded as threatening, if not intimidating, by the grey mediocrities who run Hollywood.

She produced her new film, *Nuts*, and composed the music for the end title song. She has on this occasion foreborne to direct as well, leaving that task to the reliable Martin Ritt, but she does have the major part, which provides an adequate platform for her acting capabilities.

Streisand plays Claudia Draper, an up-market hooker who operates from a luxurious Manhattan apartment. Many of her clients are out-of-town business executives on fleeting visits, admitted only after she has carried out her own form of personal vetting. Her system, for all its thoroughness, is fallible, and when a dissatisfied customer attacks her violently she kills him in self-defence.

Her wealthy parents, Karl Malden and Maureen Stapleton, already aghast at the nature of her vocation, believe that the shame of trial and prison can be avoided if she is certified insane, a view substantiated by the authorities. But

she wants to stand trial, and the film is essentially about her fight to retain the responsibility to conduct her own life.

The plot, written by Alvin Sargent, Tom Topor and Darryl Ponicsan from Topor's play, has a slightly old-fashioned ring to it, reminding us of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Whose Life is it Anyway?* In fact, Richard Dreyfuss, who played the unfortunate quadriplegic in the film version of the latter, is cast here as Claudia's publicly-appointed defending attorney who, in spite of his client's hostility and refusal to adopt a tactful courtroom attitude, is as fierce a contender for her rights as she is.

The role is something of a stereotype, that of the decent, caring liberal, stubbornly unafraid to confront legal hypocrisy and sophistry, even though it is frequently pointed out to him that it is unlikely to do his career much good. However, Dreyfuss maintains our interest in the character, especially when cross-examining Eli Wallach, as a complacent senior psychiatrist, and the parents, who eventually provide the key to Claudia's deficiencies as a person. It is not a profound film but it is satisfyingly presented.

On the surface Paul Verhoeven's

RoboCop might be seen as a standard thriller of the hi-tech violence school. Peter Weller, a policeman killed on duty, is converted by scientists into a fearsome cyborg, a one-thing police force capable of eliminating street crime in a future Detroit where law enforcement has been entirely privatized. It is in the shiny, corporate office blocks where the real villainy is to be found, and eventually the RoboCop becomes the nemesis for the corrupt business manipulators.

The screenplay, by Edward Neumeier and Michael Miner, is not only an effective satire of the genre, but also extends the prevailing trends and preoccupations of our own time into the absurd.

The special effects are breath-takingly managed and Weller's make-up, a metallic suit and a

human face grafted on to a carapace of microchippery, is awesome, and in his urban presence he deals with street scum like a robotic Dirty Harry.

In *Poussière d'Ange* (*Angel Dust*), directed by Edouard Niermans, Bernard Giraudeau is a flawed *flic*, a shabby, shuffling cop. Deserted by his wife, he has become a barfly in his provincial French city. A strange girl (Fanny Bastien), clearly not what she seems, enters his life, and turns out to be the link to a series of savage murders, dragging him into a chilling conclusion. It is an atmospheric *film noir*, the plot turning sharply at selected moments, and it has that refreshingly cynical attitude towards police methods prevalent in French cinema. ○

—GEORGE PERRY

OPERA

Pountney's Grimm reality

DAVID POUNTNEY'S new staging of *Hansel and Gretel* for English National Opera is one of that hyper-inventive producer's most telling experiments in psychological interpretation. He has stripped Humperdinck's musical fairy story of its original folksy whimsy and switched the action from 19th-century Germany to 20th-century England,

combining what adults will recognize as disturbing echoes of poverty, drunkenness and child neglect with a mixture of reality and fantasy that are the ingredients of the best children's stories.

The curtain rises on a moonlit vista of scaled-down suburbia, with lights glowing in windows and chimneys smoking. But when the house where Hansel and

Gretel live with their parents pops up out of the grassy bank, as though from a child's picture book, we see that reassuring appearances are deceptive.

The kitchen, furnished in 50s style, is dingy with poverty. The children, their stomachs as empty as the cupboards, play and squabble disconsolately until their careworn Mother returns home to grumble and scold them with a tongue sharpened by worry.

The park where she sends them to pick strawberries is peopled by lurking shadowy figures and sleeping tramps, two of whom turn out to be the benevolent Sandman and the Dew Fairy. Even the angels who guard the children's sleep are such comfortably familiar people as the postman, milkman, policeman and cinema usherette, in a scene which is the producer's greatest feat of deshmaltzification.

However, the focal point of all this domestic imagery is the Witch, who is depicted as an alternative facet of the Mother's character, perhaps even a child's dream version. The workaday turban and

drab, dowdy clothes having been exchanged for a smart cerise suit and blue-rinsed hair-do, she even presides over the same kitchen, now tarted up with yards of red gingham. The dual role gives Felicity Palmer the chance to bring off a vocal and dramatic *tour de force*, notably in the long solo after the Witch has captured the children, when her wild-eyed outburst verges on frenzy.

The children are particularly difficult to cast and ENO is fortunate to have two young singers able to act convincingly and fulfil the demands of Humperdinck's score. Ethna Robinson is splendidly robust and devoid of archness as Hansel, and Cathryn Pope has the ability to shed 10 years off her age as the blonde, pig-tailed Gretel while singing with appealing freshness and charm. The tipsy Father is sung with warmth and authority by Norman Bailey.

The "abundance of melody, the finesse, the polyphonic richness of the orchestration" admired by Richard Strauss, glow through Mark Elder's conducting. ○

—MARGARET DAVIES

THEATRE

Service with a smile

SHAW WAS in love 90 years ago when he wrote *You Never Can Tell* (now at the Haymarket); and love is the theme of his happiest comedy. Most of the players originally cast for it in 1897, also at the Haymarket, thought it was entirely without laughs and abandoned it during rehearsal.

However, over the years it has lived on its "great flow of spirits, a vein of pleasantry, you might say". These are the words of the waiter, William, who governs a play in which he might have been just a secondary figure. He is working at a Torbay hotel on an August day, every phrase feathered along as a soothing benison as he watches over an unexpected family reunion: "You never can tell, sir." For three acts Sir Michael Hordern is around, ineffably benignant, to say the right thing.

The second act, on the hotel terrace, brings together five members of a family: Mrs Clandon from Madeira, a women's rights veteran, dignified and feeling; her three children; and now her obstinate, cross-grained husband (a grandly uncompromising portrait by Michael Denison) separated from her for 18 years.

As Shaw suggests, the narrative matters less than its incidentals. But there is much in the ripple and

swoop of the dialogue, and in the surprises—from the first-act climax in a dental surgery to the appearance in the fourth act's fancy-dress of a fiercely professional barrister who happens (again, you never can tell) to be the waiter's son. All is conducted in the highest of spirits, with William as master of the ceremonies.

The director, Toby Robertson, a splendid Shavian, keeps precisely to the author: the characters are undistorted and the complicated manoeuvres of the second and fourth acts are managed impeccably. Irene Worth gives a sympathetic picture of a woman who could have written those Twentieth-Century Treatises. Jenny Quayle's Gloria can express the girl's passion-on-ice, and other members of the Clandon family, the twins (Abigail Cruttenden and Harry Burton), are by no means as regrettably arch as they might have been.

Finally, the legal pair: Frank Middlemass as the solicitor whose assignment is troublesome, and Derek Waring as the barrister who, even when transiently in a false nose, drives through the fourth act like a strong gale. Hordern remains to the last melodiously cadenced ○

—J. C. TREWIN

WHY MRS RODRIGUES "STEALS" CHAIRS.



"All the ladies here like going to the hairdressing salon in the hospital. It boosts our morale.

The problem is, it's 400 yards away. I can only walk 40 yards unaided, and I insist on walking there – wouldn't you?

So, first I get into my wheelchair and zip along the route. Any chair I see, I grab and position 40 yards from the last one I stole.

Then comes the big moment. I zip back to my own room, then walk – from chair to chair – all the way to the salon and back.

No one ever moves my chairs.

They wouldn't dare. They all know when I've got a hairdressing appointment!"

Mrs Rodrigues suffered severe brain injury after an accident in 1983. When she first came here, she could barely talk and could hardly move. Today she can dress herself, walk short distances, and is learning to cook with one hand only.

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Action, action: read all about it

NON FICTION

The Faber Book of Reportage

Edited by John Carey
Faber and Faber, £14.95

AT A TIME when the reputation of the Press is undeniably and perhaps deservedly low, Professor Carey has produced a book that will allow reporters to take pride in their craft. The inevitable prime constituents of his anthology, which covers some of the main news items of the last 2,400 years, are wars, massacres, executions and other horrors, but the reports remain as vivid as when they were written, and generally stand the test of our hindsight.

Admittedly not all the authors were professionals. Some were people caught up in the action—serving under Nelson at the battle of the Nile, escaping from the *Titanic*, working at the Birkenau extermination camp in Germany, carrying out guard duty at Ekaterinburg when Tsar Nicholas II and his family were shot—and their accounts, too, have the immediacy and impact that characterize good reporting.

But for the most part these eyewitness accounts are culled from the work of professional reporters or their equivalents.

Perhaps Thucydides, Plato and Oliver Cromwell should not be categorized as reporters, but when describing the plague in Athens, the death of Socrates and the battle of Marston Moor each was, in fact, reporting an event, just as Charles Dickens was when he watched a guillotine execution in Rome and Walt Whitman when he witnessed the assassination of President Lincoln.

These are some of the components of Professor Carey's book, in which, as he says, we see people clearly, as they originally were, "gazing incredulously at what was, for the moment, the newest thing that had ever happened to them". There is some relief from nastiness—Thomas Coryate's 17th-century account of the Whirling Dervishes, for example, and Henry Mayhew on the Farringdon Watercress market, W. H. Hudson on a seaside holiday in Norfolk, George Bernard Shaw musing on his



The ILN published this sketch of the attack of the Scots Greys at Balaclava in November, 1854, together with an account by a soldier who took part in the charge and who escaped unhurt: "We charged. Oh, God! I cannot describe it, they were so superior in numbers; they outflanked us, and we were in the middle of them. I never certainly felt less fear in my life than I did at that time; and I hope God will forgive me, for I felt more like a devil than a man. We fought our way out of them as only Englishmen can fight . . . But, oh! the work of slaughter that then began—'twas truly awful; but I suppose it was necessary. We cut them down like sheep, and they did not seem to have the power to resist. The plain is covered and covered with dead Russians . . ."

"Well, when we had finished this lot we thought of going home to breakfast; but no, they (the enemy) had some guns over the hills that Lord Raglan sent word were to be charged and captured at any cost. So off we went again . . . The Light charged first this time, took the guns, cut down the gunners, and then, when they thought all was right, they were met by thousands of Cossacks, who had been in ambush . . . The butchering was repeated; when suddenly a cross front and rear fire opened upon us from the hills—cannon, rifles, and file firing . . . The men on the right and left of me were both killed on the spot. We hacked our way out of it as well as we could."

mother's funeral ("Why does a funeral always sharpen one's sense of humour and raise one's spirits?"), J. R. Ackerley on rabbiting, and James Morris on the conquest of Everest—but by far the greater part of this collection will confirm what everybody already knows, that most news is bad rather than good.

In deciding what to include, Professor Carey has put more emphasis on the qualities of writing and observation than on the importance of the event, which ensures that his selection is both entertaining and surprising. The power of language, displayed here in manifold variety, is the most consistent and striking feature of the book. To pick a single example from so much will be invidious, but as a former man of *The Times* I shall fall back on that paper's old warhorse, William Howard Russell, from whose account of the battle of Balaclava this purple passage, describing the charge of the Light Cavalry Brigade, comes:

"They swept proudly past, glittering in the morning sun in all the

pride and splendour of war. We could hardly believe the evidence of our senses! Surely that handful of men were not going to charge an army in position? Alas! it was but too true—their desperate valour knew no bounds and far indeed was it removed from its so-called better part—discretion. They advanced in two lines, quickening their pace as they closed towards the enemy.

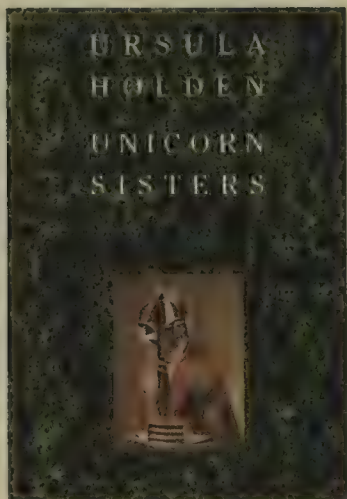
"A more fearful spectacle was never witnessed than by those who, without the power to aid, beheld their heroic countrymen rushing to the arms of death. At the distance of 1,200 yards the whole line of the enemy belched forth, from 30 iron mouths, a flood of smoke and flame, through which hissed the deadly balls. Their flight was marked by instant gaps in our ranks, by dead men and horses, by steeds flying wounded or riderless across the plain. The first line was broken—it was joined by a second, they never halted or checked their speed an instant. With diminished ranks, thinned by those 30 guns, which the Russians had laid with the

most deadly accuracy, with a halo of flashing steel above their heads, and with a cheer which was many a noble fellow's death cry, they flew into the smoke of the batteries; but ere they were lost from view, the plain was strewn with their bodies and with the carcasses of horses."

Here is an example of the professional hack rising famously to the occasion, but what makes Russell a hero in the eyes of so many journalists is not so much his account of this one dramatic event, of which he had a grandstand view, but his reporting, over a much longer period, of the appalling state of the men's rations, clothing, accommodation and medical services, and of the incompetence of those responsible. The culmination of these reports was the resignation of the government and the introduction of much-needed reforms.

The more mundane dispatches of this kind are not to be found in *The Faber Book of Reportage*: they are less literary, and make less good reading. And there is a comfortable aspect to the book,

James Bishop assesses John Carey's *Book of Reportage*, an anthology capturing 2,400 years of history in eye-witness accounts; and Ian Stewart looks at the pick of the month's fiction



perhaps because it has now all become history, which often does not exist in current reporting. At a time when the Press is unpopular, when its freedom seems less secure, it has to be remembered that good reporting is not just eye-witness accounts of big events nor just the highest qualities of writing and observation. It is about the truth, about niggling away to find the facts, uncover lies, expose injustices. If this edge is blunted future reporting will not be worth collecting.

—JAMES BISHOP

RECENT FICTION

Unicorn Sisters

by Ursula Holden
Methuen, £10.95

The Exile

by William Kotzwinkle
Bodley Head, £10.95

At Close Quarters

by Gerald Seymour
Collins Harvill, £10.95

IN A GIRLS' boarding school, seen as a microcosm of wartime social change, we come upon a sexual orgy in a dormitory involving a young officer and his 16-year-old sister, a 13-year-old evacuee from Clerkenwell and her soldier boyfriend.

This literal approach to the idea of breaking down social barriers is probably more than Ursula Holden intends since the orgy in *Unicorn Sisters* is seen through the eyes of Bonnie, a young, innocent girl who is profoundly disturbed by what she sees. It is to be viewed as an early stage in her growing

sexual awareness.

What threatens to be a bruising culture-clash in the sadly run-down Magnolia House becomes a peaceful revolution as the "gor blimeys" of the Clerkenwells engulf the "catch me someone ere I swoons" of the Magnolias. The school smells differently as Keatings powder, greasy hair and plimsolls replace talcum powder, toothpaste and new clothes. Pure vowel sounds, the ideals of grace and inner elegance, and washing up ("Bugger the dishes, they can wait") are out. Boiled eggs peeled like buns instead of having their tops sliced off, and the frenzied dancing that obliterates social distinctions, are in.

Presiding over this revolution, though with increasing remoteness, are the stony-faced headmistress, Miss Gee, and her sister, Miss Patrice. When the coming of the evacuees was announced Miss Patrice had urged the Magnolias to welcome them and accept them as their war bonus, just as they were urged to save soap and grow vegetables. As is sometimes the way with revolutions, it is not clear finally what has been gained by this upheaval. When the dance-mad Clerkenwells, led by the shockingly outspoken and sexually mature "Red", wreck the end-of-term biblical pageant, the suggestion that they should visit the homes of the Magnolias gets short shrift from the outraged parents present.

Women of a certain age (and class) will recognize the authenticity of Ms Holden's picture of life in a girls' boarding school during

the Second World War.

The same may be said of her account, which is delicately handled, of the emotional development of Bonnie and her younger sisters, Tor and Ula. Packed off to school by their mother, a singer who is now entertaining the troops, these three experience a test of their loyalty to one another in the face of new friendships, betrayals and jealousies. Fleeing the anarchy of Magnolia House, they return home to find that it has been taken over by the army and that their mother is apparently entertaining one of the officers. How the rapidly maturing Bonnie copes with that challenge, and with what consequences, one would like to have known quite as much as anything that has preceded it. But Ms Holden, I would guess, has saved that for another book.

The level of communication in a madhouse, a Hollywood star reflects in *The Exile* on a visit to his aunt in just such an institution, was not very different from that of a typical press conference. The questions put to him by Aunt Ruth's fellow-inmates just seem more intelligent.

The lunacy of the Hollywood dream factory and the beguiling complexities of psychoanalysis have long proved irresistible targets for satire. But when William Kotzwinkle seeks to relate them to the horrors of the Third Reich, and to embody all this in his revelation of the schizoid delusions of the actor David Caspian, his argument is difficult to follow. What is Caspian's problem? He is jealous of younger actors and tired

of feeble scripts and sentimental gush, though his agent, Myron Fish ("I'm trying to save you from art"), urges him to stick to the well-tried formula. Offered a part in a space epic, Caspian finds that while working on it he intermittently thinks he is Felix, a sinister black marketeer living in Nazi Germany.

Why Nazi Germany? Well, it seems that Caspian, whose father had returned from Europe with some Nazi souvenirs, studied in Germany in the 1960s. In this crucial period of his life, which included an encounter with an aging Nazi, he learned how to act. Somehow, his analyst concludes, a kind of latent fascism in him also emerged, his ambition to "seize power" originating in a desire to escape from Pittsburgh, the city of his birth. In vain Caspian insists that, as a star, he has won all he had fought for.

There is no stopping the analyst once he has got into this track, and there is no stopping Kotzwinkle when he plays illusion/reality games with an actor who is trapped in a schizoid delusion of Nazi Germany while his director is asking for just one more take. There is a good deal of confused nonsense in *The Exile* but Kotzwinkle carries it off exuberantly and his writing crackles with laconic and paradoxical quips.

In Gerald Seymour's *At Close Quarters* we find a young British diplomat without any military experience, and a marksman who can aim into a 5 inch circle at 1,000 yards despite a disease in the retina of his shooting eye, both hunting a terrorist in El Beqa'a valley in Lebanon.

This sounds like the stuff of a good old-fashioned adventure story, as does the diplomat's personal motive in getting the man who had killed his girl friend. But the prime minister who lost an ambassador in the same attack, and who sees the Lebanon mission as a demonstration of Britain's unflinching resistance to international terrorism, underlines the topical realism we have come to expect from this author. *At Close Quarters* is the latest of Mr Seymour's thrilling dispatches from the world's trouble spots ○

—IAN STEWART

The capital list

A discerning guide to entertainment in the city



"Decadent colonialists", Charles Dance and Greta Scacchi, in White Mischief set in 1940s Kenya. Playing cops and robots in hi-tech thriller, RoboCop.



Simon Callow directs Pauline Collins in Willy Russell's play, Shirley Valentine. You Never Can Tell with Michael Hordern and Abigail Cruttenden

THEATRE

Where applicable, a special telephone number is given for credit card bookings. The address & telephone number of each theatre are given only on the first occasion it appears in each section.

Andromache. Janet Suzman takes the title role in Jonathan Miller's production of the Jean Racine classic. Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (928 7616, cc 261 1821).

... And Then There Were None. Agatha Christie's thriller with Jack Hedley, Rodney Bewes, Miriam Karlin, & Glynn Barber, Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 5122, cc).

Back with a Vengeance! Barry Humphries, in his many disguises, outrages & entertains, torments, or flings "gladders" at his audience. Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (836 2660, cc). REVIEWED JAN, 1988.

Countryman. A trilogy of mid-18th-century social comedies by Carlo Goldoni, reworked by director Mike Alfreds. Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc).

Entertaining Strangers. David Edgar's expansive community play about the clash of wills between a 19th-century Dorchester brewery proprietress (Judi Dench) & an evangelical parson (Tim

Pigot-Smith). Audiences are expected to move around the scene. Cottesloe, National Theatre.

Fathers & Sons. Turgenev's novel of mid-19th-century Russia in a richly truthful, if selective, version by Brian Friel & with imaginative performances by Alec McCowen, Richard Pasco, & most affectingly, Robin Bailey. Until Feb 20. Lyttelton, National Theatre.

The Foreigner. Nicholas Lyndhurst in a new comedy from Larry Shue. Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3878, cc 379 6565).

J. J. Farr. Albert Finney & Bob Peck in a new play by Ronald Harwood about a former Catholic priest, released after being held hostage. Phoenix, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (836 2294, cc). REVIEWED JAN, 1988.

Lettice & Lovage. Maggie Smith & Margaret Tyack lead the cast in Peter Shaffer's original comedy about the relationship between two formidable women. Globe, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3667, cc 741 9999).

One for the Road. Willy Russell's play provides Russ Abbott with his first straight role—as a man on the eve of his 40th birthday, harking back to his student days. Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3686, cc).

Separation. David Suchet & Saskia Reeves star in Tom Kempinski's spiky romance. Comedy, Pantan

St, SW1 (920 2578, cc 839 1438).

Serious Money. Caryl Churchill's brilliant comedy of City business jealousy of Leontes, & Penny Downie wryly as Hermione & Perdita. Until Feb 20. Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, 628 7995, cc).

Shirley Valentine. Pauline Collins stars in the new Willy Russell play, directed by Simon Callow. Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (836 9887, cc).

A Small Family Business. Ayckbourn's comedy about corruption in a family business grows steadily blacker, ending with a denouement that is hard to accept. Stephen Moore takes the lead. Olivier, National Theatre.

South Pacific. West End revival for one of Rodgers & Hammerstein's best scores. Gemma Craven, Emily Belcourt & Berrie Reading take the leads. Prince of Wales, Coventry St, W1 (839 5887, cc 240 7200).

Speculators. City comedy from Tony Marchant, set in the dealing room of a major bank. Until Feb 27. The Pit, Barbican.

A View From The Bridge. Arthur Miller's near-classic, directed by Alan Ayckbourn. Michael Gambon takes the lead as the Brooklyn longshoreman. Aldwych, WC2 (836 6404, cc).

Waiting for Godot. Alec McCowen & John Alderton play Samuel Beckett's trypsin. Directed by Michael Rudman. Lyttelton, National Theatre.

The Winter's Tale. Terry Hands's unaffected Stratford production, with Paul Shelley conveying the pointless jealousy of Leontes, & Penny Downie wryly as Hermione & Perdita. Until Feb 20. Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, 628 7995, cc).

You Never Can Tell. Michael Hordern, Irene Worth & Michael Denison in a revival of the Bernard Shaw comedy. Haymarket, SW1 (930 9832, cc). REVIEW ON P63.

FIRST NIGHTS

The Best of Friends. New play from Hugh Whitemore starring Rosemary Harris, Ray McAnally & John Gielgud in his first West End role for eight years. Opens Feb 10. Apollo, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 2663, cc 434 3598).

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Tennessee Williams's classic with Ian Charleson & Lindsay Underwood. Opens Feb 3. Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc).

A Place with the Pigs. Athol Fugard's comedy about a Red Army deserter. With Jim Broadbent. Opens Feb 16. Cottesloe, National Theatre.

The Rink. Josephine Blake & Diana Langton in the surprising tale of a roller-skating rink. Directed by Paul Kerryson. Opens Feb 17. Cambridge,

The Glass Menagerie. (PG). Respectfully claustrophobic & austere version of the Tennessee Williams classic, directed by Paul Newman. With Joanne Woodward, Karen Allen, & John Malkovich excellent as the beleaguered son. REVIEWED JAN, 1988.

The Lost Boys. (18). Brothers Michael & Sam, played by Jason Patric & Corey Haim, move to a strange new town & get involved with the kind of people who only ever come out at night. Director: Joel Schumacher plishes this enjoyable adventure film just right, juggling the thrills & comedy

Earlham St, WC2 (379 5299, cc). **A Touch of the Poet.** Timothy Dalton forsakes filmic rigour for Vanessa Redgrave in Eugene O'Neill's drama of an Irish-American family. Opens Feb 2. Young Vic, The Cui, SE1 (928 6363, cc 379 4444).

On Babylon. British portraits of Derek Walcott's drama of music & politics. Set in Jamaica in 1966, it features an impending visit from Haile Selassie. Feb 4-Mar 12. Riverside, Clasp Rd, W6 (748 3354, cc 379 4444).

A Wholly Healthy Glasgow. Ian Heggie's witty drama, set in a health club, mirrors attempts to revitalize the city. Jan 28-Feb 20. Royal Court, Sloane Sq, SW1 (730 1745, cc).

FRINGE

Brown Blues. Award-winning cabaret show featuring the music of Jung & Parker & the scathing one-liners of Arnold Brown. Feb 15-27. Lyric Studio, King St, W6 (741 2311, cc).

Company/Kids' Stuff. Childhood is explored in a double bill. First up is a rare chance to see an adaptation of the Samuel Beckett novel, directed by Tim Pigott-Smith. *Kids' Stuff* is by the Australian Raymond Coussie & stars Julie Forsyth as a French boy. Until Feb 6. Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2 (420 8230, cc 379 6565).

Easy Vibe. Revival of a Noel Coward play, first seen in 1926 but not performed professionally since, about the marriage between an older woman & a young man and the ensuing hostility it provokes. Until Feb 21. King's Head, 115 Upper St, N1 (226 9116).

The Film Society. New drama from Jon Robin Baitz. Feb 4-27. Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (722 9301).

intelligently, & Kiefer Sutherland (son of Donald) exudes much menace as the town tearaway. David. Opens Jan 29. Warner West End, Leicester Sq, WC2 (439 0791, cc 439 1534).

Dark. (18). Curiously paced thriller which sees Oklahoma movie Chaleh (Adrian Pasdar) ensnared by chance acquaintances (Jenny Wright) & introduced to a group of vampires. Kathryn Bigelow's first major feature sacrifices tension for violence.

No Way Out. (15). Kevin Costner as a naval hero on attachment to a Washington bigwig (Gene Hackman).

How the Other Half Loves. Ayckbourn's classic comedy, revolving around two dinner parties directed by Alan Strachan. Feb 4-Mar 19. Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, SE10 (888 7755, cc 853 3800).

Madam Butterfly. Janice Cairns repeats her moving portrayal of the title role, in a production by Graham Vick set amid the squalor of turn-of-the-century Nagasaki. Feb 2, 4, 6, 11, 13, 17, 19, 25.

Hansel & Gretel. New production by David Pountney. Feb 3, 5, 9. review on p62.

Orpheus in the Underworld. Cartoonist Gerald Scarle's designs provide the background to this hilarious send-up of Second Empire satire. With Terry Jenkins as Orpheus, Lesley Garrett as Eurydice, John Brecknock as Pluto & Andrea Bottom as the twinkle-toed Mercury. Feb 10, 12, 18, 20, 23, 26.

STAYERS

Antony & Cleopatra. Olivier, National Theatre (928 2252), until Feb 6; Cans, New London (405 0072); Chess, Prince Edward (734 6951); Follies, Shaftesbury (379 3399); *42nd Street*, Drury Lane (836 8108); *Kiss Me Kate*, Savoy (838 8888); *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, Ambassador's (836 6111); *Me & My Girl*, Adelphi (836 7611); *The Miserables*, Palace (434 0909); *The Mousetrap*, St Martin's (836 1443); *The Phantom of the Opera*, Her Majesty's (839 2244); *Run For Your Wife*, Criterion (930 3216); *Starlight Express*, Apollo Victoria (828 8665).

When the girl they are both involved with (Sean Young) is killed he is assigned to catch the chief suspect—himself. Roger Donaldson's thriller is ingenious & glamorous, with clever plot-twisting.

Nuts. Barbara Streisand tries to prove she isn't. Also starring Richard Dreyfuss. Opens Feb 12. Warner West End, Leicester Square, WC2 (439 0791, cc 439 1534). REVIEW ON P62.

Possessor d'Ange. (18). Atmospheric film noir with Bernard Giraudeau as a flawed policeman. Opens Feb 12. Screen on the Hill, 203 Haverstock

Hill, NW3 (435 3366, cc). review on p62.

RoboCop. (18). First major American film from Paul Verhoeven about a technologically reconstituted policeman who sets about cleaning up American streets. Opens Feb 5. Leicester Square Theatre, Leicester Sq, WC2 (930 5252, cc 839 1759); Odeon, Marble Arch, W1 (723 2011). review on p62.

Sanny & Rosie Get Laid. (18). Hanif Kureishi wrote & Stephen Frears directed *My Beautiful Laundrette*, but their new film is less clearly structured

OPERA

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA. London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3161, cc 240 5258).

Madam Butterfly. Janice Cairns repeats her moving portrayal of the title role, in a production by Graham Vick set amid the squalor of turn-of-the-century Nagasaki. Feb 2, 4, 6, 11, 13, 17, 19, 25.

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Billy Budd. Thomas Allen sings Billy, one of his most admired roles, in Tim Albery's new production, conducted by David Altherton, with Philip Langridge as Captain Vere & Richard Van Allan as Claggart. Feb 24, 27.

NEW SADDLERS' WELLS OPERA. Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (278 8916, cc).

Bitter Sweet. First London revival for over 50 years of Noel Coward's oper-

etta, with Valerie Masterson & Ann Mackay sharing the role of Sari; directed by Ian Judge, conducted by Michael Reed, who has reorchestrated the score. Feb 24-Mar 19.

ROYAL OPERA. Covent Garden, WC2 (240 1066/1911, cc).

Parafal. Bernard Haitink conducts Bill Bryden's new production, designed by Hayden Griffin. Feb 2, 4, 6, 11, 13, 17, 19, 25.

Jenifa. Ashley Putnam & Eva Randova again sing the roles of Jenifa & the Kostelnicka in Yuri Lyubimov's powerfully motivated production. Jan Binkhof makes his house debut as Luca, Christopher Thieleman conducts. Feb 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25.

Un ballo in maschera. Richard Armstrong conducts a strong international cast, headed by Margaret Price as Amelia, Giacomo Aragall as Gustavo III, Giorgio Zancanaro as Ankarström, Inna Akhopyeva as Madame Arvidson. Feb 26-29.

Orphée et Eurydice. The 1774 Paris version of Gluck's opera, presented by Charles Farncombe, directed by Tom Hawkes. Jan 31.

RoboCop. (18). First major American film from Paul Verhoeven about a technologically reconstituted policeman who sets about cleaning up American streets. Opens Feb 5. Leicester Square Theatre, Leicester Sq, WC2 (930 5252, cc 839 1759); Odeon, Marble Arch, W1 (723 2011). review on p62.

Sanny & Rosie Get Laid. (18). Hanif Kureishi wrote & Stephen Frears directed *My Beautiful Laundrette*, but their new film is less clearly structured

& flounders in mixing its story of filial relationships with a muddled diatribe against Thatcherite England. A fine cast headed by Shashi Kapoor, with Ayub Khan Din & Frances Barber as his son & his wife cleaning-in-law, & Claire Bloom as an old flame, ensure the film's watchability.

White Mischief. (18). Distinguished cast, including Charles Dance, John Hurt, Sarah Miles & Greta Scacchi, in Michael Radford's film about decadent colonialists in 1940s Kenya. Opens Feb 5. Curzon, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (439 4805, cc).

CINEMA

The following films are expected to be showing in London or on general release at some time during the month. Programmes often change at short notice. Consult a local or daily newspaper for exact location & times.

China Girl. (18). Disappointing feature from cultish American director Abel Ferrara, in which the tired story of a pair of star-crossed lovers (Richard Panjabi & Sari Chang) is played out against the increasingly violent

backdrop of gang-warfare between New York's Little Italy & Chinatown areas. Opens Jan 29. Metro, Rupert St, W1 (437 0757); Cannon, Oxford St, W1 (634 010).

Free Freedom. (PG). Richard Attenborough's passionate attack on apartheid, with the story of Steven Biko, the black activist who died in police custody in Rhodesia in 1977, & of Donald Woods, the white rebel who befriended him. REVIEWED DEC, 1987.

Fatal Attraction. (18). Michael Douglas gets more than he bargains for when, with his wife out of town, he leaves a party with Glenn Close for a one-night stand. Glossy "woman-cried" thriller from Adrian Lyne. REVIEWED DEC, 1987.

Games of Stone. (15). James Caan gives a breathtaking performance as a Vietnam veteran posted to the Old Guard, sent on duty at the Arlington National Cemetery. Set in 1968, Francis Coppola's new film cleverly shows the dilemma of a man who resents the political manipulation of the army in the conflict in South-East Asia. REVIEWED JAN, 1988.

The Glass Menagerie. (PG). Respectfully claustrophobic & austere version of the Tennessee Williams classic, directed by Paul Newman. With Joanne Woodward, Karen Allen, & John Malkovich excellent as the beleaguered son. REVIEWED JAN, 1988.

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Dance with the dinosaurs at the Natural History Museum: available for hire as a party venue for a naturally mammoth fee

LIST OF THE MONTH

PLACES FOR PARTIES

When is a party not a party? When it is an Event. Here are some of the more off-beat ideas people have had:

1 Natural History Museum. Dance with the dinosaurs in the Museum's central hall. For a mere £2,000 (VAT & insurance included), you can pack in 500 of their upright descendants, but security guards will be on hand to make sure things do not get too primitive. (Information: 589 6323.)

2 Tower Bridge. £500 a walkway might make it a bridge too far for some, but it is a genuine spectacle & attracts a number of corporate bashes. Tower Bridge, SE1 2UP.

3 The Circle Line. Alternatively, for 50p you can travel round & round London until the last tube. The last time this was tried the police were tipped off, but the 150 sassy revellers hopped trains before they arrived.

4 Riverboat. Hire a boat & pretend to be Aristotle Onassis for an evening. Expect to have to pay about £500 to cover hire fee, food & sound system. (Information: Capital Cruises, 350 1910.)

5 Westworld. London's most outrageous nightclub. Famous for its dodgems & other fairground delights. Organized in an *ad hoc* fashion three or four times a year.

6 The London Dungeon. Available for hire if wax-works of torture & live rats are your idea of a good night out. Groove with the gore for around

£1,000. (Information: 403 0606.)

7 InterCity to Brighton. A club that's really going places; an occasional (& quite legal) jaunt that hires a carriage on a late-night seaside run. Cramped but a lot of fun.

8 Warehouse Parties. Once a cult, now less common since the authorities got wise. Still viable for those ingenious enough to find an empty warehouse to "borrow".

9 Lloyds Bank Cashpoint Foyer. Since the introduction of the indoor cashpoint, this has been a wacky student favourite.

10 Home. If you have to stay at home, why not liven things up with a cabaret act in your front room? Jongleur's Promotions will hire out anything from a fire-eater to a one-man band. (Information: 877 0155.)

OTHER EVENTS

Crufts Dog Show. Pampered pets, petulant owners. Feb 11-14. Earl's Court, SW5 (Information: 493 7838).

London International Mime Festival. Venues throughout London host the world's largest festival of mime, visual theatre & comedy. In addition to new work from established companies, such as Nola Rae & Théâtre De Complicité, comedy acts such as Ben Keaton & Australia's Los Trios Ringbarkus will be performing. Until Feb 7. (Programme details: 637 5661.)

Toys, Costumes & Textiles. Varied sale including original 1930s Mickey Mouse watches & a blouse worn by Marilyn Monroe in the film *Bus Stop*. Feb 11, 10.30am & 2.30pm. Sotheby's, 34/35 New Bond St, W1 (493 8080).

BOOKS: THIS MONTH'S BEST SELLERS

HARDBACK NON FICTION

- 1 (2) **One Day For Life** by Search 88. Bantam Press, £16.95. Photographic record of one day in Britain, every sale benefiting charity.
- 2 (1) **Oscar Wilde** by Richard Ellman. Hamish Hamilton, £11.95.
- 3 (4) **The Victorian Kitchen Garden** by Jennifer Davies. BBC, £10.95.
- 4 (3) **The Discovery of the Titanic** by Robert D. Ballard. Hodder & Stoughton, £16.95.
- 5 (6) **The Great Philosophers** by Bryan Magee. BBC, £14.95.
- 6 (—) **Guinness Book of Records 1988** edited by A. Russell. Guinness Superlatives, £8.95.
- 7 (—) **Perestroika** by Mikhail Gorbachev. Collins, £12.95. Readable and, in part, reasonable.
- 8 (—) **Under the Eye of the Clock** by Christopher Nolan. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £8.95. Moving autobiography of a crippled young man which has already won a Whitbread prize.
- 9 (—) **The Unforgettable Fire: The Story of U2** by Eamon Dunphy. Viking, £10.95.
- 10 (—) **Armageddon?** by Gore Vidal. André Deutsch, £11.95. Waspish essays from America's No 1 critic.

PAPERBACK NON FICTION

- 1 (2) **Goodbye Soldier** by Spike Milligan. Penguin, £2.95. Milligan goes to war.
- 2 (3) **Floyd on France** by Keith Floyd. BBC, £6.95. Rich, creamy, readable and indigestible!
- 3 (—) **Fish Course** by Susan Hicks. BBC, £6.95.
- 4 (—) **Messianic Legacy** by Michael Baigent. Corgi, £3.95. Another view of Christianity—and a highly unorthodox one.
- 5 (5) **His Way: The Unauthorised Biography of Frank Sinatra** by Kitty Kelley. Bantam £3.95. Readable, whether approved by its subject or not.
- 6 (—) **Wicked Willie's Low-Down on Men** by Gray Jolliffe and Peter Mayle. Pan, £3.95.
- 7 (—) **Going Solo** by Roald Dahl. Penguin, £3.50. His autobiography.
- 8 (—) **Giles Cartoons 1987**. Express Newspapers, £2.25.
- 9 (—) **Cry Freedom** by Richard Attenborough. Bodley Head, £7.95. The moving story of Steve Biko.
- 10 (—) **How to be a Complete Bitch** by Pamela Stephenson. Virgin Books, £3.95.

HARDBACK FICTION

- 1 (1) **Moon Tiger** by Penelope Lively. André Deutsch, £9.95.
- 2 (2) **Hot Money** by Dick Francis. Michael Joseph, £10.95.
- 3 (9) **Wolf Winter** by Clare Francis. Heinemann, £10.95. Suspense on the Finnish-Russian border at the height of the Cold War.
- 4 (—) **Yes, Prime Minister Vol II** by Jonathan Lynn and Anthony Jay. BBC, £9.95.
- 5 (3) **Winter** by Len Deighton. Hutchinson, £11.95. An exciting novel set in Germany between 1900 and 1945.
- 6 (—) **Empire** by Gore Vidal. André Deutsch, £11.95. Another huge piece of faction.
- 7 (—) **Yes, Prime Minister Vol I** by Jonathan Lynn and Anthony Jay. BBC, £9.95.
- 8 (8) **Presumed Innocent** by Scott Turow. Bloomsbury, £12.95. Tense courtroom drama.
- 9 (7) **The Colour of Blood** by Brian Moore. Cape, £10.95. Exciting novel about a Polish primate who narrowly escapes assassination.
- 10 (4) **The Spring of the Ram** by Dorothy Dunnett. Michael Joseph, £10.95. Second in the *House of Niccolo* series.

PAPERBACK FICTION

- 1 (6) **Whirlwind** by James Clavell. Coronet, £4.95. Number 5 in the Hong Kong *Noble House* saga.
 - 2 (—) **Bolt** by Dick Francis. Pan Books, £2.95.
 - 3 (1) **It** by Stephen King. New English Library, £4.50. The evil menace confronted by a gang of children.
 - 4 (2) **The Old Devils** by Kingsley Amis. Penguin, £3.95. Wry story of small-town Wales.
 - 5 (3) **A Taste for Death** by P.D. James. Faber & Faber, £5.95. Gloriously intricate crime fiction.
 - 6 (—) **The Other Side of Paradise** by Noel Barber. Coronet, £3.95. Polio and passion in Polynesia.
 - 7 (7) **A Perfect Spy** by John le Carré. Coronet, £3.50. Of its sort, a perfect book.
 - 8 (—) **Equal Rites** by Terry Pratchett. Corgi, £2.50. Making fun of fantasy.
 - 9 (4) **Bill Bailey** by Catherine Cookson. Corgi, £2.95.
 - 10 (—) **Rose Rent** by Ellis Peters. Futura, £2.50. Another Brother Cadfael medieval mystery.
- Brackets show last month's position. Information from Book Trust. Comments by Martyn Goff.

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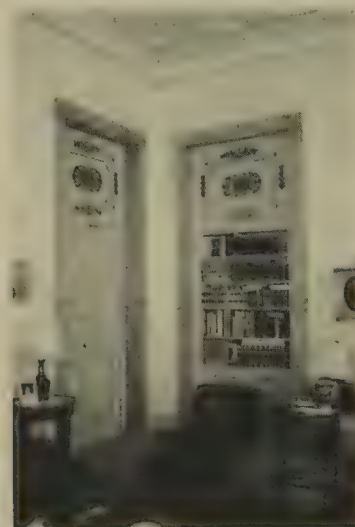


LISBON. St George's Castle is, without doubt, Lisbon's most characteristic feature. It dates back to the 10th century and is considered the birthplace of the City. Offering impressive views of Lisbon and the Tagus River, the Castle is a must for every visitor, be they just tourists or Heads of State, who are usually received here, officially, by the Mayor of Lisbon. Just outside the walls, at some 100 yards distance, we offer for sale a monastery which was probably built during the 14th century. Serving as a seminary school from 1566, it was partly destroyed by the earthquake of 1755. The descendants of the Portuguese family who rebuilt the monastery in 1870 still own it today. The property is served by several entrances on street level, and consists of some 22 rooms, totalling a built area of 795 square metres. The property includes a genuine cloister, a small chapel, gardens on ground floor and first-floor level, a meditation grotto decorated completely with shells, and warden's accommodation in a separate outbuilding. It also features many original 18th and 19th century tiles. Although the building is structurally sound it is in need of refurbishment. Considering the prime location, our opinion is that the property could ideally be converted into a small inn plus first class restaurant (both non-existent in the area) or into two to six luxury residential units.

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Song and dance in Ecchinswell

Tom Fort reveals Andrew Lloyd Webber's designs on a Hampshire village

THE REPUTEDLY publicity-shy Andrew Lloyd Webber has disclosed in an interview with the *News of the World* that he employs a chauffeur because when he drove his BMW himself, people would recognize him and try to carve him up. Can we presume from this that Lloyd Webber now sits in the back, heavily disguised? Two firmer deductions, perhaps, are that he has a lively imagination and is not deficient in self-esteem.

It is beyond dispute that Lloyd Webber is a very famous composer, and a very rich one. There are differing opinions on whether he is a good one. I have nothing useful to say on the subject, knowing nothing of his work. I have not willingly been to a musical since, as a schoolboy, I was dragged off to see Cliff Richard in *Summer Holiday*. I am happy to defer to such as the late Derek Jewell, who called Lloyd Webber "probably the most significant composer of popular music after Ellington in this century".

However, I think one may question whether Lloyd Webber's aptitude for turning a nifty tune qualifies him for a secondary career as a restaurateur, something on which his heart is apparently set. He is a man with a gastronomic mission. He explained to my excellent local paper, the *Newbury Weekly News*, that he dreamed of having "a really great English restaurant... a place where families would bring their children, as they do in France".

The proposed setting for the realization of this dream is the village of Ecchinswell, a settlement of about 800 people which straggles along a dip in the north Hampshire downs, not far from Newbury. A mile or two beyond the village lies Lloyd Webber's country home, Sydmonton Court, close to Watership Down, of rabbit fame.

Lloyd Webber bought the house, with a modest parcel of acres attached, in the 1970s. He lived there quietly, composing his tunes, trying them out in the local church, contributing unostentatiously to good causes, and generally causing no upset. Then, about 18 months ago, he suddenly decided to enter the first division of local landowners. For £2.3 million, he bought the 1,200 acres of the Sydmonton Court estate, which stretches to Ecchinswell's main street, and includes the village shop and post office.

In the early days Lloyd Webber took a close interest in this shop, with curious results. Villagers who arrived to collect their customary



half pound of streaky bacon, or lump of soapy Cheddar, found themselves faced by an unaccustomed—not to say unrecognizable—array of temptations. Beluga caviar jostled with Scottish smoked salmon and exotic pâtés, while the frozen beans and fish fingers made way for chilled champagne. It was as if Fortnum's had mated with Spar.

This experiment in social enlightenment flopped. After a year Lloyd Webber disclosed that the shop had lost £11,000. But in the meantime he had had a dream. A redundant farmhouse next to the shop would be converted into a modest 60-seat restaurant, with parking for 45 cars, and six bedrooms for those willing or unable to journey home after gorging themselves. "Cross-fertilization" between the restaurant, the shop and the Sydmonton Court farm would simultaneously pitchfork the locality out of the gastronomic dark ages, and achieve economic viability. Unfortunately for Lloyd Webber, he found his visionary gleam was not shared by his neighbours. The forces of reaction and social myopia stored in every rural community were soon released. Outdated notions about the preservation of rural tranquillity were aired. A petition was raised, and the parish council had its say.

All this might well have counted for nothing, had not a newly-arrived resident, stockbroker Paul Irby, decided the matter was too important to be left to the amateurs. Having forked out around £400,000 for his period home, he was not prepared to see his ideals of country life fractured by herds of invading pleasure-seekers and gluttons. His tactics were to employ a public-relations firm, and to brief London solicitors Lawrence Graham to act for him.

It worked. The restaurant plan—representing barbarism or renaissance, according to perspective—got the bum's rush from the planning authority. Lloyd Webber's reaction was swift. Other adjectives might also be applied. He announced the closure of the village shop and post office, saying he could not afford the losses. In a letter—"Dear Ecchinswell"—he expressed his "desperate sadness".

The consequence of this was a new upheaval in the village, by now experiencing its own version of inner-city tension. A meeting of the parish council—normally the forum for quiet discussion of matters such as street lights and the condition of footpaths—was interrupted by boisterous Lloyd

Webber supporters, demanding a policy U-turn. Another petition was got up, assuring the composer that the village loved him, and would be proud to have his restaurant.

The "squoir", informed of this apparent change of heart, relented. He ordered that the shop stay open, at least for the time being. It became known that he might, after all, persist with his vision, and appeal against the council's decision. Should he do so, he will find Irby and his friends ready for battle.

It would be nice to ask the composer about his intentions, but he is well protected against inquiries. One of his staff said reverentially: "He is in the south of France, composing. He cannot be disturbed." "He is in New York, supervising *The Phantom of the Opera*," said another. "He has given strict orders not to be disturbed." "He is a composer," said another secretary, sternly. "That must take precedence over everything else."

So, for the moment, the people of Ecchinswell must wait to see if Andrew Lloyd Webber's dream is still flying, or is dust. At least we may dare to hope that the saga will furnish him with dramatic inspiration ○

Tom Fort is a journalist working for the BBC

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